

107
WALKS IN A FOREST:

OR,

11660 df 6

P O E M S

DESCRIPTIVE OF SCENERY AND INCIDENTS
CHARACTERISTIC OF
A FOREST,

AT DIFFERENT SEASONS OF THE YEAR.

By THOMAS GISBORNE, M.A.

THE FOURTH EDITION, CORRECTED.

Poeticæ propositum aut duplex, aut ex duobus alterum, vulgo statuitur; nimirum aut Prodesse, aut Delectare, aut etiam Utrumque. Mallet equidem Utilitatem solummodo, quasi ultimum ejus finem, statuissent; Delectationem vero, quasi rationem & viam, per quam ad istum finem unice perveniret: ita ut judicaretur Prodesse Delectando.

LOWTH, De Sacra Poesi Hebræorum.

L O N D O N :

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1799.



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TO THE
REV. WILLIAM MASON,
OF ASTON, YORKSHIRE,

THE FOLLOWING

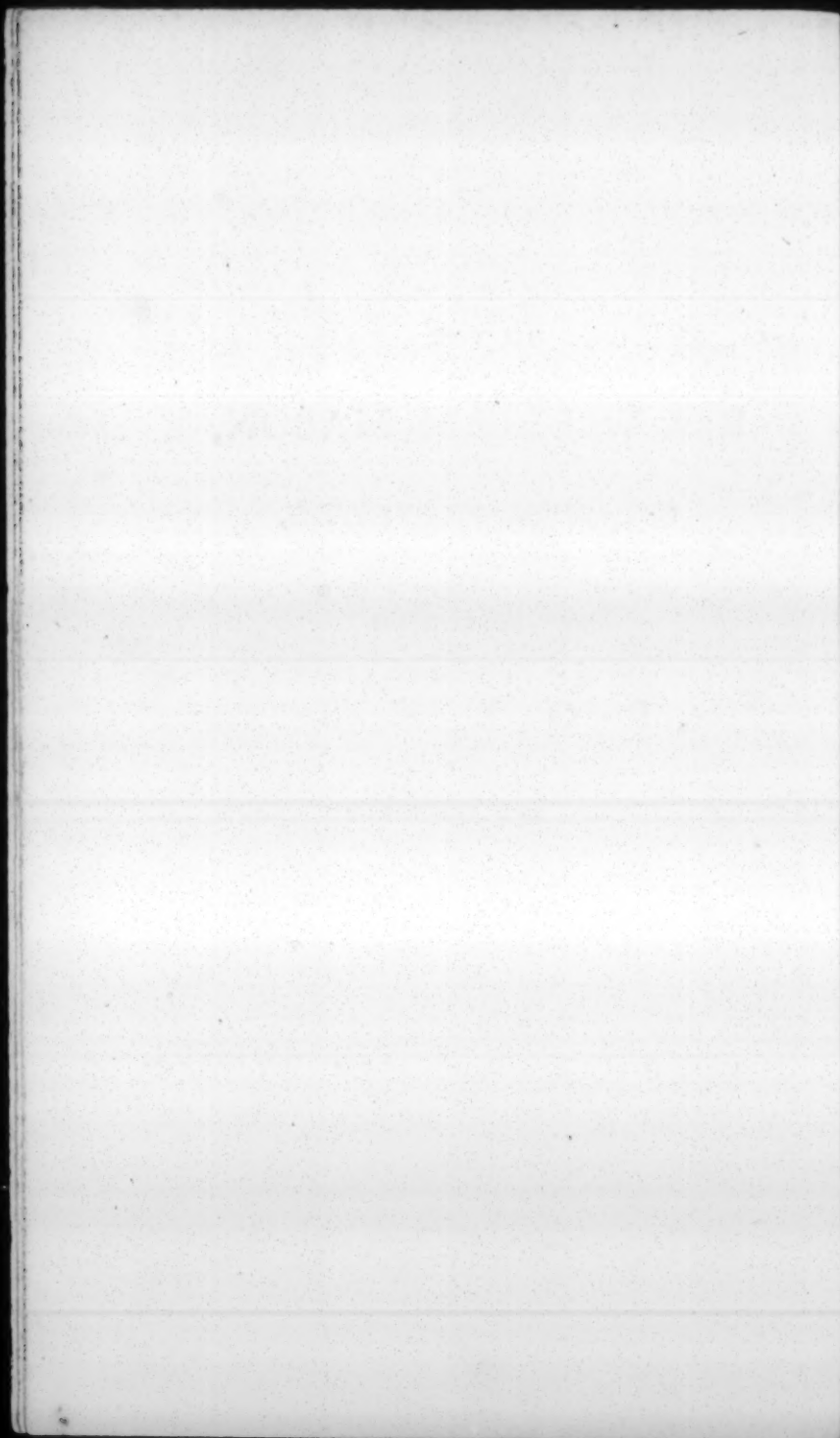
P O E M S

ARE INSCRIBED

BY HIS OBLIGED AND

AFFECTIONATE FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR.



P R E F A C E.

THE scenes and incidents noticed in the subsequent Poems are such, with some exceptions, introduced by way of contrast, as occur in the Forests of Great Britain. The Author has endeavoured to delineate them with such a degree of particularity as might mark the characteristic features of each ; and to avoid on the one hand florid and indeterminate description, and on the other, that minuteness of detail which would be scarcely intelligible to persons not accustomed studiously to examine the face of nature, and might prove tedious even to accurate observers. He has also had in view another object which he willingly avows ; namely, to inculcate, on every fit occasion, those moral

truths, which the contemplation of the works of God in the natural world suggests, and that reverence and love for the great Creator which it is adapted to inspire. He trusts therefore that, not only when occupied in a professed enquiry into human duties, but also when engaged in composing the following pages, he has been employed in his proper vocation. And he would gladly hope that the present performance may tend to infuse into the minds of persons who delight in natural scenery, and especially of the young, those momentous principles, the influence of which, whether he solicits attention in prose or in verse, he is chiefly anxious to promote.

YOXALL LODGE,
December 2, 1795.

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WALK THE FIRST.

ARGUMENT.

An ancient Poet's Comparison of the supposed Non-existence of Man after Death with the vernal Revival of the Vegetable World—The Lesson which ought to have been deduced from that Revival—Appearance of a Forest in May—Forest Trees—The Angler—Forest Flowers—Analogy between the Diversity of Vegetable Productions and the Diversity of Human Talents—Forest Birds—Address to Parents—Deer—Cattle from the Highlands of Scotland, and their attendant Herdsman—Benefits of the Union of England and Scotland—The Herdsman's History—Fall of Timber—Charcoal-burners—Nature provides for the Succession of Trees—Comparative Freedom of Forest Trees, and of Trees taken under the more immediate Control of Man—This Subject illustrated by a Comparison between the State of the People of Great Britain and that of the Hindoos—Duty of the former towards the latter.

WALKS IN A FOREST.

WALK THE FIRST.

SPRING.

“ THE meanest * herb we trample in the field,
“ Or in the garden nurture, when its leaf
“ In Autumn dies, forebodes another Spring,
“ And from short slumber wakes to life again.
“ Man wakes no more ! Man, peerless, valiant, wise,
“ Once chill’d by death, sleeps hopeless in the dust,
“ A long, unbroken, never-ending sleep !”

* Αι, αι, ται μαλακαι μεν επαν καλα καπον ολῳηαι,
Η τα χλωρα σελινα, το τ' ευθαλες υλον ανηθον,
Υστερον αυ ζωηι, και εις ετος αλλο φυηι.
Αμμες δ' οι μεγαλοι, και καρτεροι, η σοφοι ανδρες,
Οππote πρωτα θανωμες, ανακοοι εν χθονι κοιλα
Ευδομες ευ μαλα μακρον, ατερμονα, νηγξειον υπνον.

Moschus, in Epitaph. Bion.

Such was thy plaint, untutor'd bard, when May,
As now, the lawns reviv'd ! 'Twas thine to rove
Darkling, ere yet * from Death's reluctant shade,
In cloudless majesty, the Son of God
Sprang glorious ; while Hell's Ruler, he who late,
With frantic scoffs of triumph, to his powers
Pointed the sad procession as it moved
From Calvary to the yet unclosed tomb,
View'd the grave yield its Conqueror ; and aghast,
Shunn'd, in the deepest midnight of his realms,
The wrath of earth's and heaven's Almighty Lord.
Said the desponding lay, " Man wakes no more :"
O blind ! who read'st not in the teeming soil,
The freshening meadow, and the bursting wood,
A nobler lesson !—He, who spake the word,
And the sun rose from Chaos, while the abyfs
From the new fires with shuddering furge recoil'd ;
He, at whose voice the moon's nocturnal beam,
And starry legions, on the admiring earth
Rain'd lustre ; He, whose providence the change
Of day and night and seasons crown'd with food

* Moschus flourished about two hundred years before the Christian era.

And health and peace proclaim'd; bade Nature's hand
 Point to the scenes of dim futurity.
 He on a world, in Gentile darkness lost,
 Pitying look'd down: He to bewilder'd man
 Bade Spring, with annual admonition, hold
 Her emblematic taper; not with light
 Potent each shade of doubt and fear to chase,
 Yet friendly through the gloom to guide his way,
 'Till the dawn crimson'd, and the impatient East,
 Shouting for joy, the Day-star's advent hail'd.

That star has risen, and with a glow that flames
 The sun's meridian splendor, has illumed
 The distant wonders of eternity.
 Yet may this sylvan wild, from winter's grasp
 Now rescued, bid the soul, on loftiest hopes
 Musing elate, anticipate the hour *
 When, at the Archangel's voice, the slumbering dust
 Shall wake, nor earth nor sea withhold its dead:

* "Vide quàm in solatium nostri resurrectionem futuram
 omnis natura meditetur. Sol demergit & nascitur; astra labuntur
 & redeunt; flores occidunt & reviviscunt; post senium arbuta
 frondescent; semina non nisi corrupta revirescent. Ita corpus in
 sæculo, ut arbores in hiberno occultant virorem ariditate mentitâ.
 Quid festinas ut crudâ adhuc hyeme reviviscat & redeat? Expec-
 tandum nobis etiâ corporis ver est."—MINUCIUS FELIX.

When starting at the crash of bursting tombs,
Of mausoleums rent, and pyramids
Heaved from their base, the tyrant of the grave,
Propt on his broken sceptre, while the crown
Falls from his head, beholds his prison-house
Emptied of all its habitants ; beholds
Mortal in immortality absorb'd,
Corruptible in incorruption lost.

How swells the enraptured bosom, while the eye
Wanders unfated with delight from shade
To shade, from grove to thicket, from near groups
To yon primæval woods with darkening sweep
Retiring ; and with beauty sees the whole
Kindle, and glow with renovated life !
For now, at Spring's reanimating call,
Each native of the forest, from the trunk
Towering and huge down to the tangled bush,
Its own peculiar character resumes.
Chief of the sylvan realms, its verdant wreath
With tender olive stain'd the oak protrudes,
Proud of a shelter'd monarch, proud to lend
A chaplet still to British loyalty.
Even yet with ruddy spoils from autumn won
Loaded, the beech its lengthen'd buds untwines.
Its knotted bloom secured, the ash puts forth

The winged leaf : the hawthorn wraps its boughs
In snowy mantle : from the vivid greens
That shine around, the holly, winter's pride,
Recedes abash'd : the willow, in yon vale,
Its silver lining to the breeze upturns ;
And rustling aspens shiver by the brook ;
While the unfulled stream, from April showers
Refined, each sparkling pebble shews that decks
The bottom ; and each scaly habitant
Quick glancing in the shallows, or in quest
Of plunder slowly failing in the deep.
There oft at eve, by shadowing alders veil'd
From keen-eyed trouts, fix'd where the fable flood
Mantled with foam, with twisted roots o'erhung,
Portends a giant prey, the angler drops
His fly in quivering circles on the pool
Fluttering with mimic wings ; then, while his hand
Trembles with hope, beholds, ill-omen'd sight,
That tells of dire misfortune ! fractured lines
Dependent, or in complicated folds
Linking the tangled boughs that sweep the stream,
And rise and fall with every passing wave.

Beneath the sylvan canopy, the ground
Glitters with flowery dyes : the primrose, first
In mossy dell returning Spring to greet :

Pilewort, that o'er her roots of old renown
 Expands the radiance of her starry bloom :
 Arum, that in a mantling hood conceals
 Her sanguine club, and spreads her spotted leaf
 Arm'd with keen tortures for the unwary tongue :
 Anemone *, now robed in virgin white,
 Now blushing with faint crimson : fraudulent spurge †,
 That seeks in beauty's garb her snares to hide,
 In milky stream her poison veils, her stem
 In ruddy mantle wraps, and from a zone
 Of dusky foliage elevates more bright
 Her crest of gold : forrel ‡, that hangs her cups,
 Ere their frail form and streaky veins decay,
 O'er her pale verdure, till parental care
 Inclines the shortening stems, and to the shade
 Of closing leaves her infant race withdraws :
 Orchis § with crowded pyramids the bank

* Wood anemone. *Anemone nemorosa* Linn.

† Wood spurge. *Euphorbia amygdaloides* Linn.

‡ Wood forrel. *Oxalis acetosa* Linn. This plant, as soon as its petals have fallen off, thrusts its seed-vessels, with a motion in appearance almost voluntary, under the contiguous leaves; the foot-stalk, which till then had been straight, bending itself back in a sharp angle, and thus bringing down its charge to the shelter provided by nature.

§ *Orchis mascula* Linn. Wood orchis.

Purpling : the harebell, as with grief deprest,
Bowling her fragrance : and the scentless plant *,
That with the violet's borrow'd form and hue
The unskilful wanderer in the shade deceives.

In size, in form, in texture, and in use,
How various are the tribes whose verdure warms
And decorates the earth ! Some from the wild
Untrack'd by foot of man, from mountain glens,
And rifted precipices starting, urge
Aloft their tapering boles and knotted strength,
Destined with fleets to spread the main, or build
Engines, whose ponderous and convulsive strokes
Thundering shall rock the ground. With pensile boughs
Some droopo'er willowy streams, and yield their growth
For humbler service. Some in grassy pile
And flowery broidure clad, with fragrance cheer,
With food sustain, the animated world.
Yet all one forming hand, one source supreme,
Own mid distinctions infinite, one Lord,
Boundless in might, in wisdom, and in love ;
And as his eye with vivifying beam
Smiles, or the golden flood of life withdraws,

* Dog's violet. *Viola canina* Linn.

Flourish or fade. Plans of concordant aim
Speak the same Author. Mark the varied dower
Of talents given to men. These trace the laws
That bind the planet to its orb, and heave
The billowy tide. The helm of empire those
Rule, in the storm serene ; or poise the scales
Of justice ; or when mad ambition scoffs
The sacred league, nor reckes the landmark, hurl
The long-suspended thunderbolt of war.
Some in translucent narrative recall
Past ages, or in visionary song
Heroic worth pourtray. Inventive, some
Call art the paths of life with needful aid
To smooth, or grace with ornament. Some ply
The spade and ploughshare, skilful to foreknow
What best each soil may yield. Vain of his powers,
Thee, the great Giver, thee, Parent of good,
Man overlooks or scorns. Thy several gifts,
Harmonious though dissimilar, all conspire
To swell the sum of general bliss, all work
Thy glory ; all well pleasing in thy sight,
Who bad'st the children of the dust perform
Each his peculiar office, and combin'd
In one vast family with fraternal love,
Lend mutual aid, and praise their common God.

While thus the imprison'd leaves and waking flowers
Burst from their tombs, the birds that lurk'd unseen
Amid the hybernal shade, in busy tribes
Pour their forgotten multitudes, and catch
New life, new rapture, from the smile of Spring.
The oak's dark canopy, the moss-grown thorns,
Flutter with hurried pinions, and resound
With notes that suit a forest ; some perchance,
Rude singly, yet with sweeter notes combin'd,
In unison harmonious ; notes that speak,
In language vocal to the listening wood,
The fears and hopes, the griefs and joys, that heave
The feather'd breast. Proud of cœrulean stains
From heaven's unsullied arch purloin'd, the jay
Screams hoarse. With shrill and oft-repeated cry,
Her angular course, alternate rise and fall,
The woodpecker prolongs ; then to the trunk
Close clinging, with unwearied beak assails
The hollow bark ; through every cell the strokes
Roll the dire echoes that from wintry sleep
Awake her insect prey ; the alarmed tribes
Start from each chink that bores the mouldering stem :
Their scatter'd flight with lengthening tongue the foe
Pursues ; joy listens on her verdant plumes,
And brighter scarlet sparkles on her crest.
From bough to bough the restless magpie roves,

And chatters as she flies. In sober brown
Drest, but with nature's tenderest pencil touch'd,
The wryneck her monotonous complaint
Continues; harbinger * of her who, doom'd
Never the sympathetic joy to know
That warms the mother cowering o'er her young,
A stranger robs, and to that stranger's love
Her egg commits unnatural: the nurse,
Unwitting of the change, her nestling feeds
With toil augmented; its portentous throat
Wondering she views with ceaseless hunger gape,
Starts at the glare of its capacious eyes,
Its giant bulk, and wings of hues unknown.
Meanwhile the little songsters, prompt to cheer
Their mates close brooding in the brake below,
Strain their shrill throats; or, with parental care,
From twig to twig their timid offspring lead;
Teach them to seize the unwary gnat, to poise
Their pinions, in short flights their strength to prove,
And venturous trust the bosom of the air.

* The Welsh consider this bird as the forerunner or servant of the cuckoo, and call it *gwâs y gog*, or the cuckoo's attendant. The Swedes regard it in the same light. Pennant's Brit. Zool. 4th edit. vol. i. p. 238. In the midland counties of England, the common people call it the cuckoo's maiden.

O ye ! whose knees a youthful progeny climbs,
While mirth, the fruit of innocence and love,
Dimples their cheeks, and shuts their laughing eyes,
Think on your charge ! Fast as the expanding mind
Imbibes the lesson, from her fount above
Bid Truth in ampler stream infuse her lore.
Leave not, in vernal dawn when life invokes
Your culturing hand, the vacant field a prey
To weeds quick sprouting : plant with earliest care
The seeds you most desire should fill the soil ;
And nurse, with zeal proportion'd to its worth,
Each rising produce. Teach your infant race,
That 'tis not theirs, like songsters of the grove,
Born but to sport and flutter for a day,
To dote on vain and transitory joys.
Teach them the harder nobler task decreed
To prove the sons of Adam. Teach them love
Supreme of God, and, next to God, of man.
Teach them 'tis theirs, in arduous conflict ranged
'Gainst Sin and Powers of darkness, to make known
Their firm allegiance to the King of Kings.
Teach them, though weak, to triumph in the strength
Omnipotence, spectator of the war,
At supplication's cry delights to yield
The faithful combatant ; while Heaven spreads wide

Her glories, and displays the victor's crown,
A crown eternal ; and beneath, Hell yawns
Infatiate, thunders through each quivering gulf,
And heaves her floods of ever-during fire.

Nor want these lawns that terminate the woods
Their tenants. O'er the gorse the sportive deer
Vault with elastic bound, and sweep the plain
In mock pursuit. Pour'd from the neighbouring farms,
O'er their new realms, with broad inquiring gaze,
The wide-spread cattle stray. Behold yon herd
Dragging, as worn with toil, the heavy step,
Or stretch'd innumerable in recumbent ease :
Mark the unguarded front, the slender limb,
The tawny ear, the fable-vested side.
From Scotian hills they come. There were they wont
To pick from rocky chinks the blade, and crop
The sapless twigs of heath ; there, school'd in arts
Taught by necessity, with docile feet
Uplifted and again descending quick,
The stubborn furze they bruised, and of its arms,
Pungent in vain, despoil'd their wintry fare :
Or in the stormy Hebrides forlorn,
Rush'd duly from the moor, scenting afar *

* See Pennant's *Voyage to the Hebrides*, 4to. 1774, p. 308,
and Lightfoot's *Flora Scotica*, vol. ii. p. 906.

The ebbing tide ; and prowling on the sand,
And o'er the slippery stones, with weeds marine
And ocean's refuse famine's rage repell'd.
Now to gay fens and fields of plenty brought,
Their driver quits them ; he who, deck'd in plaid
And plumed bonnet, had their steps pursued,
While flocking children gaz'd and wonder'd loud,
All the long tedious march ; and still, when showers
Beat fleetly, round his limbs regardless wrapt
His chequer'd covering ; and when cross the road
A bright rill hurried, from the knapsack drew
His bowl and oaten flour, and frugal mix'd
The food delicious to his palate braced
By labour, and by luxury unpall'd.

How blest thy counsels, Policy, inspir'd
By Wisdom, Justice, Mercy ! At thy nod,
Contiguous kingdoms, once by rival aims
And savage feuds disjoin'd, and mutual wrong,
Like kindred drops of living silver blend
In one congenial mass. Their bordering plains
No more with piles of slaughter'd warriors heap'd,
Invaders and invaded, nor illum'd
By midnight gleams from hamlets waked by shout
Of dire incursion spreading flames and death,
Smile grateful. Mouldering on its craggy base,

Its useleſs towers unviſited by man,
Years of alarm, of conflict, and of woe
The caſtelled manſion ſcarce records.
O'er the rude ſtorms that vex'd a jarring iſle
Her veil oblivion draws : reſentment, hate,
In ſilence with the buried warrior ſleep.
Hence with a ſiſter's love, her wealth, her arts,
Albion to Thule's utmoſt beach, to ſeas
That round Hebridian cliffs rebellow, yields
Unſparing. Hence yon herdsman, he whoſe fires
Trode not on Engliſh ground but fire and blood
And rapine mark'd their ſteps, from Thule's beach
And Hebrid cliffs the pledge of concord bears,
And pours o'er Mercian * vales the annual joy.

Far other toils his early youth engag'd,
When with unequal hands the huge clymore †

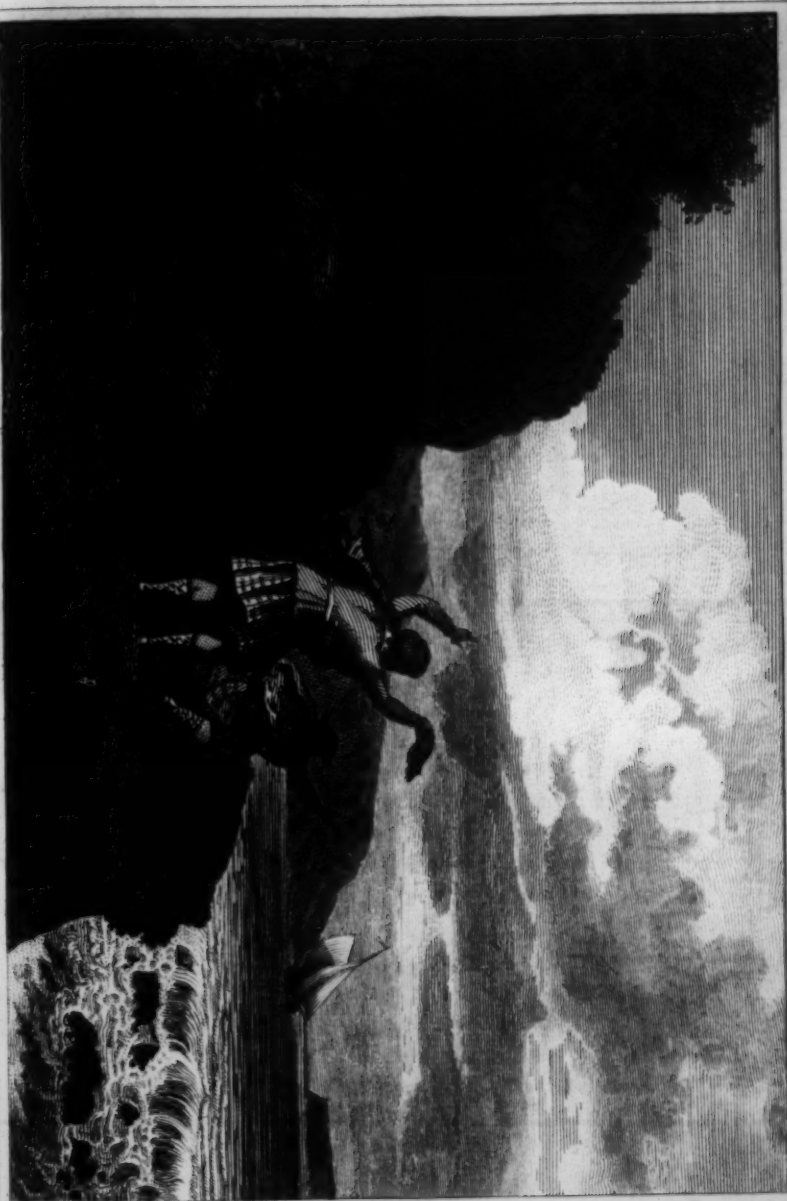
* The ancient kingdom of Mercia comprehended ſeventeen of the middle counties of England.

† The great two-handed broad-ſword of the Highlanders, uſed from ancient times down to the battle of Killcrankie; and probably of the ſame kind with the “*ingentes gladii*,” which Tacitus deſcribes the Caledonians as employing at the battle of the Grampian Hills. The target was commonly uſed in conjunction with it. See Pennant's *Voyage to the Hebrides*, 4to. 1774, p. 289, 290; and his *Tour in Scotland*, 4to. 3d edit. p. 191; and Part 2d, 4to. 1776, Additions at the end, p. 28.

Staggering he strove to whirl, and scarce upheld
The target's weight. Oft have I seen his scars,
And often have I listen'd to his tale.
Him uninform'd attachment to his chief,
That chief misguided loyalty, arranged
Beneath Rebellion's standard. At thy frown,
Insulted Albion, on Culloden's plain
Each frantic hope expired ! With terror wing'd,
Through pathless solitudes the chieftain fled
The hot pursuit ; together fled the youth
Breathless and pale, nor reck'd the throbbing wound.
Long were the hours, O Morvern ! ere thy beach,
Way-worn, with tottering speed they trod, and gazed
Impatient for the bark, ordain'd to plow
Thy unfrequented billows, if mischance
Should blight their enterprise : as he who, stretch'd
Sleepless and tossing on his feverish bed,
Pants for the dawn, and to the adverse wall
Still turns his wearied fight, eager to catch
The first pale ray that mitigates the gloom,
And tells of twilight's birth. Four tedious days
Each formless speck, that on the horizon's verge
Hover'd obscure, with straining eyes they watch'd
From morn to latest eve ; whether the moon
Bade ocean his recoiling floods absorb,
Or hurl'd the deluge on the expecting shore.

The fifth morn rose : a bark drew nigh : the chief,
High on a rock projecting o'er the deep,
The appointed signal waved.—At once the cliffs
Rebellowing shook.—The foes, who on his track
With vengeful wile had hung, noted their prey,
And launch'd the murderous bullet. Prone he fell ;
And o'er his head the reddening furies closed.
Fear-struck, and forrowing for his hapless lord,
The youth from slaughter fled : the adverse band
Perceived him not. O'er many a houseless moor,
And bog beneath his footsteps quivering wide,
And craggy height he wander'd, till he gain'd
The piny forest that o'er Jurna's * deeps
Flung its black horrors ; while amid the gloom
Gray rocks their glittering summits rear'd, and dash'd
From precipice to precipice, through clouds
Of sparkling mist the headlong torrent shone.
There in a cavern, from whose beetling roof
The native fir shot pillar-like to heaven,
And lightly waving in the wind the birch
Stream'd its long branches, he found refuge. Moss

* Loch Jurn, a salt-water loch on the western coast of Inverness-shire, penetrating many miles inland, and surrounded by mountains and pine-forests of Alpine magnificence. See Pennant's *Voyage to the Hebrides*, p. 342, 343.



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A Native American man and woman with their fish.



Supplied his couch, decaying boughs his fire.
 With fylvan berries, and thy tuberous root,
 Cormeille *, by Famine's delving hand explored,

* The Heath-pea, *Orobus tuberosus* Linn. ; called Cormeille, or Carmele, in the Highlands.

" Among other vegetables, we have in great plenty in the
 " heaths and woods the following berries ; wild rasps, wild straw-
 " berries, blueberries, bugberries, uva ursi, &c. And we have
 " one root I cannot but take notice of, which we call Carmele.
 " It is a root that grows in heaths and birch woods to the bigness
 " of a large nut, and sometimes four or five roots are joined by
 " fibres ; it bears a green stalk, and a small red flower. Dio,
 " speaking of the Caledonians, says, *Certum cibi genus parant ad*
 " *omnia ; quem si ceperint, quantum est unius fabæ magnitudo, minimè*
 " *esurire aut sitire solent.* Cæsar, de Bell. Civ. lib. 3tio, writes that
 " Valerius's soldiers found a root called Chara, *quod admistum lacte*
 " *multam inopiam levabat ; id ad similitudinem panis efficiebant.* I am
 " inclined to think that our Carmele (that is, sweet-root) is Dio's
 " *Cibi genus*, and Cæsar's *Chara*. I have often seen it dried, and
 " kept for journies through hills, where no provisions could be
 " had. I have likewise seen it pounded and infused ; and when
 " yest or barm is put to it, it ferments, and makes a liquor more
 " agreeable and wholesome than mead. It grows so plentifully,
 " that a cart-load of it can easily be gathered ; and the drink of
 " it is very balsamic." Mr. Shaw's Account of Elgin. Pennant's
 Tour in Scotland, p. 292.

" The Highlanders have a great esteem for the tubercles of the
 " roots of the Cormeille ; they dry and chew them, in general to
 " give a better relish to their liquor : they also affirm them to be
 " good against most disorders of the thorax, and that by the use
 " of them they are enabled to repel hunger and thirst for a long

His strength exhausted he renew'd. And oft
 With shaft uncouth, while envious falcons scream'd,
 Floating in air, and from the mountain's brow
 The indignant eagle mark'd him, he transfix'd
 The roe *, bounding in vain ; and snowy hare †
 Changeful ; and from the pine's high top brought down
 The giant grouse ‡, while boastful he display'd

“ time. In Breadalbane and Ross-shire, they sometimes bruise and
 “ steep them in water, and make an agreeable fermented liquor
 “ with them. They have a sweet taste, something like the roots
 “ of liquorice ; and when boiled, we are told, are well-flavoured
 “ and nutritive, and in times of scarcity have served as a substitute
 “ for bread.” Lightfoot's *Flora Scotica*, vol. i. p. 389.

* Roes are mentioned by Mr. Pennant as common inhabitants
 of the Scotch pine forests, from the banks of Loch Lomond to the
 entrance into Caithness. When the ground is covered with snow,
 they browse on the extreme branches of the pine and juniper.
 Pennant's *Tour*, p. 94. Eagles and falcons also frequent the same
 scenes.

† The Alpine Hare ; of which Mr. Pennant (*Tour*, p. 84)
 says, that it inhabits the summits of the highest hills, is less than
 the common hare, and, when pursued, seeks shelter as soon as pos-
 sible under stones. During summer its predominant colour is grey.
 About September it begins to assume a snowy whiteness ; and be-
 comes entirely white, except about the edges and tips of the ears.
 In April it resumes its grey coat.

‡ The Capercalze, called also Auercalze, Capercally, and Coo-
 of the Wood, and occasionally from its great size the Horse of the
 Woods, as it sometimes weighs fifteen pounds, is the largest of the
 grouse species. It inhabits pine forests, and perches on the top of

His breast of varying green, and crow'd, and clapp'd
His glossy wings. Oft, peering round with eye
That fear'd the glance of human eye to meet,
Beneath the cliff, where many a fragment rude
Skirted the ebbing lake, at eve he roam'd ;
Sprang on the seagull fluttering in the snare
His art had woven ; from their caverns drew
The shell-clad race, or seiz'd the finny prize
Left floundering in the shallows. Peace meanwhile
Brighten'd the land, and Justice through the depths
Of glens and woods proclaim'd the fated sword.
He heard, and joyful sought his much-loved home.

A deeper tinge imbrowns the wild ; yon hill
With bristling terror heaves ; the forest quakes ;
Through every glade portentous echoes roll.
Heard ye not Britain's voice ? Her oaks mature,
To brave the shock of elements, the might
Of Gaul, she summons ; bids them guard her peace

very tall trees, and feeds on the extreme shoots. The colour of the breast is green, resembling that of the peacock. Pennant's Tour in Scotland, p. 198 and 293 ; and do. part 2d, 4to, 1776, p. 23, 24. In the spring, this bird is accustomed to take its station on a high tree, clapping its wings, and crowing with a loud and shrill voice. It may then be approached with the utmost ease by the fowler. See Pennant's British Zoology, 4th edit. vol. i. p. 264, and p. 266, note.

With tributary aid, and round her isle
Build on the seas an adamantine wall.
Pierce we the dells. The solitude resounds
With busy life. The uplifted axe, urged deep
By finewy arms, while the well-planted feet
Keep firm each muscle of the straining back,
Delves the resisting trunk ; from every stroke
Wide fly the fragments. Now the assailants pause,
Breathless and faint ; now, to determined rage
By mutual exhortation fired, return
Fierce to the charge. The sylvan monarch groans,
And shakes his leafy crown presageful. Hark !
That blow was fatal. From his base disjoin'd,
While from his furious sweep the victors fly,
He falls ; loud sounds the shock ; his splinter'd arms
Crash ; the hills tremble ; ruin spreads the ground.
So, Youth of Pella, by thy vengeful arm
Cast from her throne when mitred Persia fell,
Earth, ocean, shock : snapt from their parent stock,
Her hundred provinces in fragments huge
Spread Empire's ruin o'er the astonish'd East.
Now this, now that way drawn the harsh saw grates,
Severing the mighty limbs. Those strip the bark ;
In heaps these build it. Those the feebl' boughs
Hew to fit lengths ; these in well-order'd tiers
Arrange them, sedulous the pile to form,

Where smother'd heat shall drink the sap, and change
The green to footy charcoal. Near its side
Yon children deep in earth their yielding poles,
Ribs of the temporary cabin, fix
With tops united : these with pliant shoots
Wattled, his wigwam as the Indian weaves
In transatlantic shade, or cloth'd with turf,
The summer hut on Snowdon's windy brow
As Cambrian herdsmen rear, from dews of eve
And noontide suns the clamorous train shall guard,
While the slow-kindling mafs they tend, and watch
To ope in time fresh inlets for the breeze,
And pierce new chimnies for the imprison'd smoke.
Thus eager in the sylvan toil unite
Brisk youth and sturdy manhood ; each absorb'd
In his own task, nor conscious that the arm
Of industry, plied hard for daily bread,
Plants the foundations of a kingdom's power,
And props the splendid fabric of the state.
Soon the peel'd trunk, reft of its branched head,
Seized by thy grasp, Mechanic Art, shall quit
Its native lawn ; while the tired oxen pant,
And the wain groans beneath the ponderous load.

So fade the chieftains of the wood ; their place
Knows them no more ; the desolated blank
Gapes, and admits the long-excluded day.

Yet shall contiguous saplings through the void
Push their swift growth ; and with columnar stems
Mounting through ether, and with ample spread
Darkening the plain, shall emulate their fires.
Thus when the statesman and the warrior fall,
Dejected Albion mourns. Ere long a race,
With memory of paternal virtue warm'd,
Pleads in the senate, conquers in the field ;
And while approving heaven the purpose crowns,
Upholds the reign of freedom and of law,
Of social order and domestic peace.

All hail, free foresters ! I hail you free,
Though at the call of Man, Vicegerent Lord
Of earth, your heads in homage bow. For man
Regards your rights, nor harasses the wild
With needless interference. There his hand
Controls you not : while yet he spares the tree,
He spares its freedom ; leaves the trunk to shoot
As nature prompts the kind ; nor strains the boughs
To forms uncouth, nor trims with plastic sheers,
And calls the havock beauty. Think on those,
Your kindred, whom the tasteless tyrant shapes
At his own will ; and dooms their living stems
To service more degrading than his pile
Of roots and logs and refuse brushwood knows.
Think on the yew, that fix'd in luckless hour

Its growth beside his dwelling. See its crest
Loft to a stump, its horizontal range
Curtail'd ; while from the mutilated stock
Pillars and pyramids and statues rise,
Giants and dwarfs. Behold the tortured box,
Now frown, a bear ; now grin, an ape ; now feign
A peacock's pride, and in eternal green
Still strut, still spread its unrelenting tail.
Mark, happy foresters, your brethren's shame,
And triumph in your liberty ! And ye,
Britons, ye sons of freedom, turn your eyes
To climes that Ganges floats with streams of gold :
In links of steel where superstition binds
The unsuspecting native ; to his cast
Tethers him ; cramps his powers ; condemns to ply
With joyless hands the trade his fires have plied
With joyless hands for centuries ; proscribes
All hope of change, all prospect to o'erleap
Or burst her barriers, to the skies upraised,
And steadfast as the chambers of the grave.
Behold, and bless the Power who gave your lot
In Freedom's land, where Genius unconfined
Pursues his favourite path ; where Science warms
Each latent energy of soul ; and Truth
Heaven-born her only radiance pours abroad.
And O ! for India's wretched sons ye deem

Your subjects, yet, even yet, at length fulfil
A master's charge. Ye have a Master too,
Throned in the skies, and watchful to avenge
Neglected duty. With persuasive lore,
Not force, but truth persuasive, loose the chains
They ignorantly prize ; bid them be free
To act as men ; teach them alike to scorn
The senseless image and the wily priest,
Bow to the sceptre of impartial law,
And hail the dawn of evangelic day.

WALK THE SECOND.

ARGUMENT.

A Summer Noon contrasted with a Summer Morning—Burners of Fern—Great Conflagrations occasioned by Fern Fires—Story of a Cottager—A Forest Pool—Horses and Cattle collected by it—Village boy come in search of his Master's Cattle—Hazy Effect of Noon on remote Woods—Distant View of a Church—Reflections—A Forest, though without the characteristic Grandeur and Beauty of Mountains, of Rocks, of Lakes, or of Sea-shores, has Grandeur and Beauty of its own.

WALK THE SECOND.

SUMMER.—NOON.

THE solstice rages: Nature sinks oppress'd
Beneath the fultry glow. Hide me, ye woods,
Hide in your shades impenetrable; waft
A breeze reviving from your inmost depths;
While your tall trunks between I gaze abroad
On the parch'd world, or watch the trooping deer
Safe in the covert from the scorching ray.
What though with lifted ears to every sound
They turn? They fly not me; no murderous tube
Gleams in my hand: but far aloof they shun
Him, whose green vesture and insidious gait
Mark him their authorized destroyer. Few
And short the hours since from its height the lark
Sang the first carol to approaching morn,
And broke the twilight slumber of the grove:
Yet that brief interval the clime has changed

From temperate zone to torrid. Scatter'd clouds,
With orient blush empurpled, half obscured
The ascending orb of light; gray mists, effused
O'er the wide lawn, and from the wooded hill
Dim through their skirts discern'd retiring flow,
His labouring beams restrain'd; yon reverend oaks,
Fronting the east, across the illumined vale
Stretch'd their long shadows; dewy spangles gemm'd
The grass; o'er thymy banks and opening flowers
On gelid wings a gale of fragrance mov'd.
Now from the burning firmament the sun
Each cloud has driven; with universal light
Blazing, the earth repels the dazzled eye,
Save where a lonely spot of shade lies close
Beneath some massy tree, or woods extend
Their dark recesses; the faint traveller's step
On the tann'd plain slides printless, as when frost
Has glazed the downward path; no wondering breeze
The hush'd aerial ocean moves; and fierce
As when through Indian skies it rages, heat
Cleaves the parch'd earth, and drains the ebbing stream.
Yet cannot heat's meridian rage deter
The cottage-matron from her annual toil.
On that rough bank behold her, bent to reap
The full-grown fern, her harvest, and prepare
Her ashy balls of purifying fame.

Lo, yon bare spot she destines for the hearth ;
Now strikes the steel, the tinder covers light
With wither'd leaves and dry ; now swoops to fan
The glimmering sparks, and motionless remains,
Watching the infant flame from side to side
Run through the thin materials. Round her stray
Children or grandchildren, a cheerful train,
Dispersed among the bushes ; earnest each
To execute the task her nod assigns,
Half sport, half labour, fit for early youth.
One plies the hook, the rake another trails ;
Another, staggering, bears the verdant load
Uplifted in his arms ; another hastes
Her apron's burthen to discharge. Each step
Active and prompt obedience quickens, zeal
Inspired by love ; the temper of the soul
Which to the parent most endears the child,
The christian to his God. Well-pleased the dame
Receives their tribute ; part she heaps aside
In store for night, the embers to preserve
From quenching dews ; part on the kindled pile
Adroit she sprinkles ; duly with her fork
Then opes the sinking strata to admit
Currents of needful air ; at every gale
The enliven'd mass glows bright, and crackles loud.
Puffing from numerous chinks the smoke unfolds

Its wreathed volumes ; not as when, condensed
By evening's gelid atmosphere, it creeps
Below the hill, and draws along the ground
Its lengthening train, and spreading as it rolls,
Melts in blue vapour ; but aspiring shoots
Its growth columnar, and displays afar
Its broad and dusky head, to pilgrim's eye
As view'd o'er Salem's plain the palm ascends.
Hence shall the matron in the distant town
With lifted hands her snowy flax admire,
And scorn the produce of Hibernian looms.

Oft from these fires malignant sparks adrift
Borne by the wind ; or thrown by rustic hands
With inward purpose that the soil, from base
And noxious vegetation freed, may yield
Salubrious pasture to the grazing herd ;
Seize the dead grafs, the furzy brake invade,
Kindle the matted brushwood, and from hill
To hill the sudden conflagration pour.
Woe to the mighty oak that on the plain
Grown old in solitary grandeur, meets
The fiery deluge in its course : the blaze
Round the root rattles, climbs the finged trunk,
Devours the leaves, and o'er the topmost bough
Its smoke-stain'd canopy triumphant rears.
Thus when with dizzy heads and armed hands

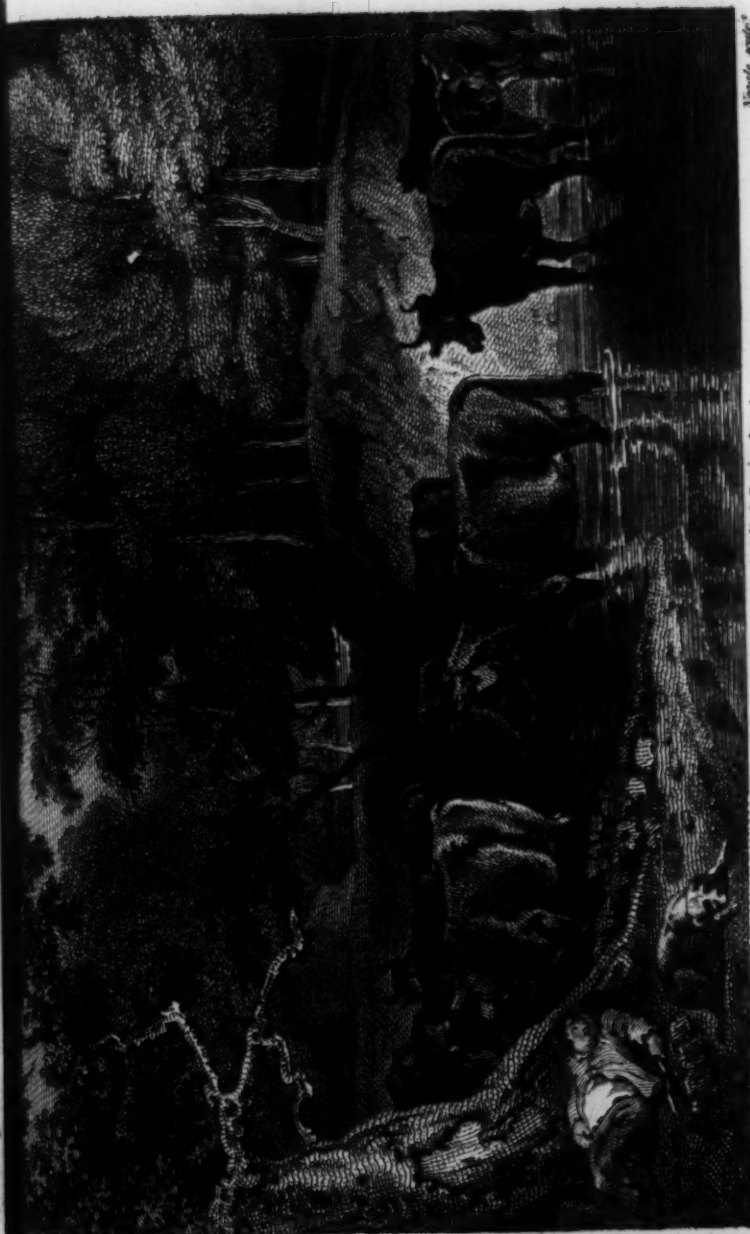
The unbridled multitude the task assumes
To cleanse from stains and mould to happier form
A state's well-order'd frame, if time or craft
Some nuisance to the public weal has raised,
The cause that moved or seem'd to move the storm,
It sinks unpitied : but the insatiate blast
Still rages, Uproar thunders, Havock stalks
Fearless ; Law, Empire falls ; the reverend pile
By hoary wisdom plann'd, by patriot strength
Uprear'd, by patriot blood cemented, falls
Headlong, and frantic myriads shout for joy.
Wider and wider o'er the blacken'd waste
Her burning tide Destruction rolls. \times From sleep
Roused by the unaccustom'd sound, the fox
Starts, listens quick, the scent of fire inhales
Appall'd, and rushes forth : the heath-cock wakes,
And springs in terror through the fervid air.
Meanwhile the clouds dark rising from the spoil
The neighbouring hamlets with familiar gaze
View unalarm'd : but at the close of day,
The horizon red with settled glow, and oft
With spiry flashes gleaming, fills with awe
Tracts far remote ; and to the boding mind
The picture holds of harvests reap'd in vain,
Of ravaged farms, and villages destroy'd.
And are these terrors vain ? Behold yon spot

Beneath the sloping covert, where the eye
Along the ditch yet faintly to be traced,
And edged with interrupted mounds of earth
By mouldering time but half worn down, pursues
The fence that once existed ; while within,
The smoother surface and the livelier green
The cultivating hand of man record.

There by the shelter'd vale a peasant youth
Attracted, fought his cot to rear ; nor fought
Hopeless : the indulgent lord of the domain
Nodded assent. Swift rose the humble wall,
And swift the straw-clad roof. Thither ere long
The happy bridegroom led the maid whose charms
Had won his heart. Soon his industrious spade
Reclaim'd a corner from the waste : in vain
The lofty-vaulting deer, the searching hare,
His wattled hedge assail'd. The garden spread
Its herbs salubrious, gay with mingled flowers,
Crocus and snowdrop, tulip brought from far,
Violet now blue, now white, and primrose drawn
From neighbouring thicket. Rolling seasons nursed
His orchard's vernal fragrance, and weigh'd low
The boughs far gleaming with autumnal gold.
Oft when the plain before the rushing North
In snowy waves moved wild, his chimney's smoke,
Whirl'd rapid in blue eddies, to his door

The wilder'd traveller led. The peasant grasp'd
His oaken staff, and wading through the drift,
Pointed the buried road ; or to his fire
Convey'd the shivering stranger, and renew'd
The crackling blaze, while from her secret store
His partner cull'd the hospitable meal.
Thus glided on the peaceful years, till age
Sprinkled their locks with silver : scarce had grief
E'er clogg'd the wing of time, save when their child,
An only daughter, o'er her husband's grave
Mourn'd ceaseless, and by wasting anguish bow'd,
Soon follow'd him ; yet left two orphan babes
The ancient pair to sooth. Their prattling mirth
Cheer'd the long winter-eve, and added joy
To blissful summer. One unhappy night,
The grandfire, who had mark'd the neighbouring hill
By kindled furze illumed o'erpower the moon,
From unrefreshing sleep with sudden start
Woke gasping : suffocating vapour dense
The cottage fill'd. Scarce conscious, he sprang forth
Untainted air to breathe. He turn'd, and saw
The fiercely vollied sparks, the pillar'd fire,
Burst from the thatch. Inward he rush'd to save
What more than life he lov'd. At once the roof
Sunk ; higher tower'd the flame : wife, husband, babes,
One ruin whelm'd ; one grave their bones received.

Behold yon pool, by unexhausted springs
Still nurtured, draw the multitudes that graze
The plains adjacent ! On the bank worn bare,
And printed with ten thousand steps, the colts
In shifting groups combine ; or, to the brink
Descending, dip their pasterns in the wave.
Bolder the horned tribes, or less of heat
And teasing insects patient, far from shore
Immerge their chests ; and while the hungry swarm
Now soars aloof, now resolute descends,
Lash their tormented sides ; and, stamping quick
And oft, the muddy fluid scatter round.
Fix'd many an hour, till milder skies recall
Desire of long forgotten food, they stand
Each in its place ; save when some wearied beast
The pressure of the crowd no longer brooks,
Or in mere vagrant mood her station quits
Restless ; or some intruder, from afar
Flying o'er hill and plain the gadbee's sting,
(For still the dreaded hum she hears, and shakes
The air with iterated lowings,) spies
The wat'ry gleam. With wildly-tossing head,
And tail projected far, and maddening gait,
She plunges in, and breaks the ranks, and spreads
Confusion, till constrain'd at length she stops,
Wedge'd in the throng. Beneath a neighbouring bush,

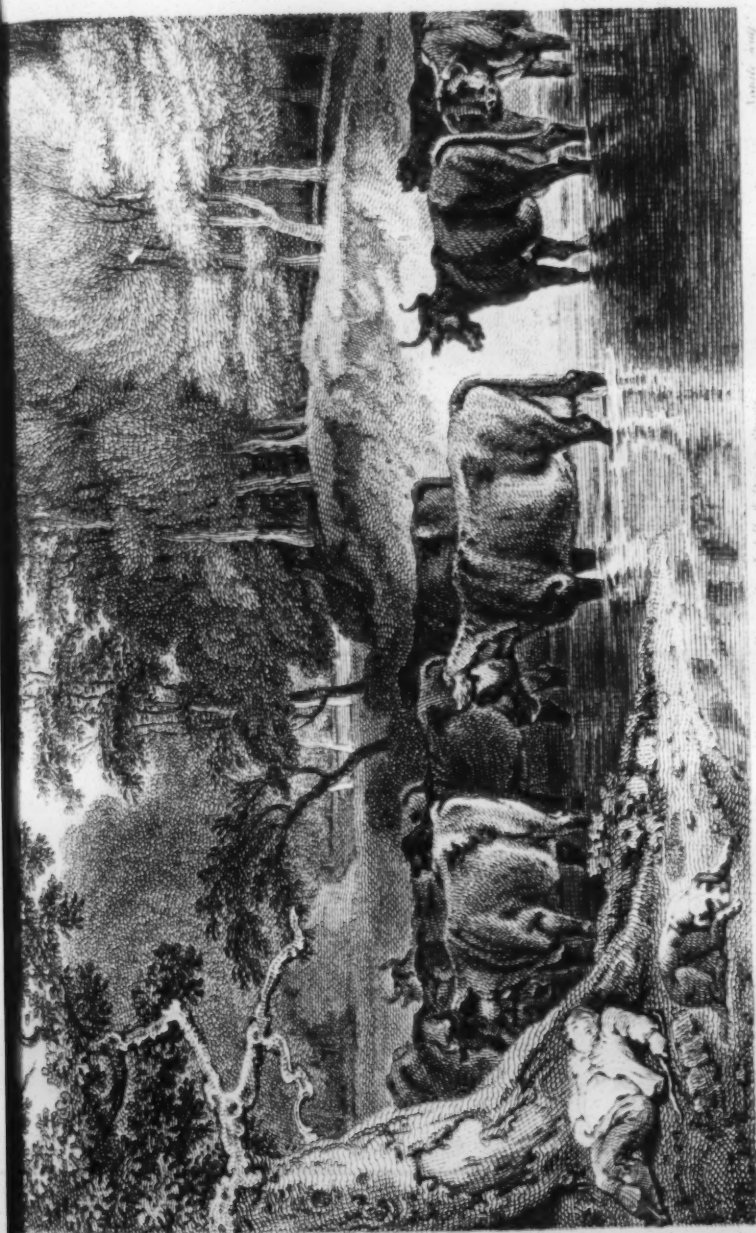


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*Published December 2^d 1837. By Cudde & Davies, Strand.
 "Behold you put by unmercifully, ye virgins
 still married, view the multitudes that gaze
 the plains adjacent."*

S. Collier del.

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Illustration

Engraved by W. H. Stiles, for G. B. Smith & Co. New York

8 copy in 1861

*And all your love and all your devotion
Will be paid back to you in a hundred fold
The price of a life*



Poor shelter from the potent ray, reclines
The rustic boy, to count his master's herd
Sent from yon hamlet ; left some straggler, seized
By sharp and sudden malady, should pine
Untended in the wood ; or, resolute
To crop forbidden pasture, overleap
The well-plash'd fence, and roam the distant field.
Panting, bareheaded, and with out-stretch'd arms
He sleeps ; and dreams of winter's frosty gale,
Of sunless thickets, rills with breezy course,
Morn's dewy freshness, and cool rest at eve.

So when in slumber the poor exile seeks
A pause from woe, delusive fancy's hand
Presents each object of his fond desire.
He reads the joyful summons to return ;
Beholds the bark prepared, the swelling sail ;
Hears the impatient seamen murmur ; grasps
The pendent rope exulting ; climbs the deck ;
Skims o'er the wave, and hails his native shore :

From the whole surface of the tepid earth,
But most from rivers rippling swift, and pools,
And trickling springs, and oozy swamps exhaled,
A vapoury steam floats, with the loaded air
Yet uncombined ; and undulating still
And ever twinkling, o'er the distant woods
Sheds a blue haze, and dims their shadowy forms.

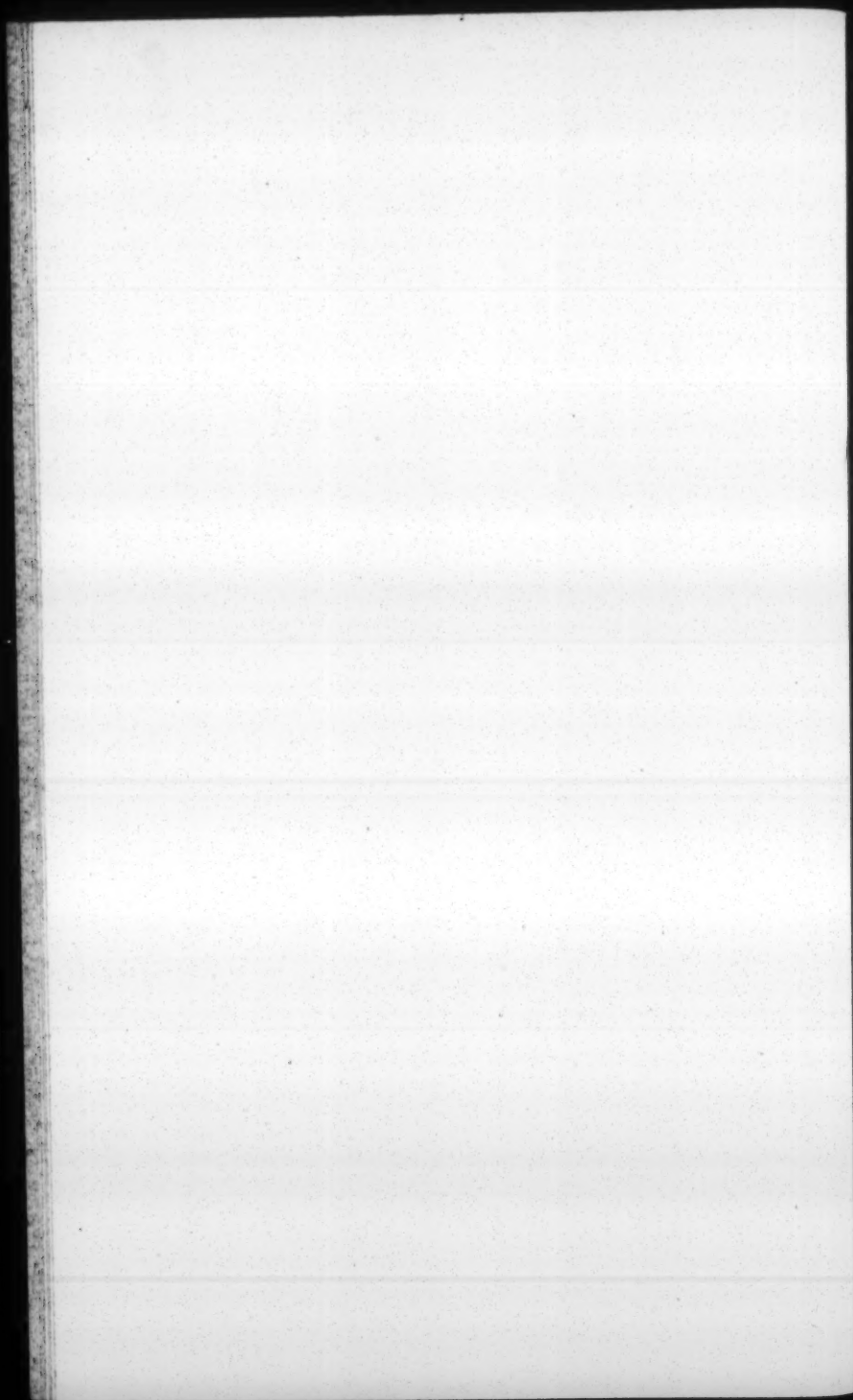
Where through the tufted coverts of the grove
That opening glade descends, and leads the eye
To scenes beyond the forest's bound removed,
How nobly mid the fading landscape stands
Yon * fane pre-eminent ! It warms my heart,
When through the wide-spread provinces I stray
Of this fair realm, to view the slender spire
And massy tower from deep-embowering shades
Oft rising in the vale, or on the side
Of gently-sloping hills, or, loftier placed,
Crowning the wooded eminence. It looks
As though we own'd a God, adored his power,
Revered his wisdom, loved his mercy ; deem'd
He claims the empire of this lower world,
And marks the deeds of its inhabitants.
It looks as though we deem'd he fills all space
Present throughout ; and bends from heaven's high
 throne,
With ear attentive to the poor man's prayer.
It looks as though we shrunk not from the thought
Of that last mansion (last as far as earth
Detains us) where, in solemn silence laid,
Our dust shall slumber, till a voice, like that
Which, speaking by the astonish'd † prophet's mouth,

* Lichfield Cathedral.

† Ezekiel, chap. xxxvii.

Roused the dry bones that strew'd the ample vale
To sudden life, shall call the unnumber'd dead,
Primæval Adam with his latest sons,
From every clime before their Judge's face
To stand, and hear their everlasting doom.

God clothes his works with beauty. What tho' here
He has not wrapp'd in clouds the mountain's head
Magnificent, nor piled the fractured rock ;
Nor delved the stony cavern stretching wide
Its unsupported roof ; nor down the steep
Pour'd the rude cataract ; nor bid the lake
Expand its lucid mirror to the sun ;
Nor ocean's billowy surges wash the base
Of promontories, whose white cliffs, with fowl
Swarming of every seaborn tribe, resound
With countless wings, and never-wearied cries ;
Yet has his hand the intermingling charms
Of hill and valley, lawn, and winding dell,
In rich exuberance spread ; yet has his hand
Hung these wild banks with sylvan majesty.



WALK THE THIRD.

ARGUMENT.

A Summer Evening described—Moon rises—Stars and Planets—
Address to them—Nocturnal Birds in pursuit of Insects—The
Subject illustrated by the annual Migration of Herrings—Wild-
Cat—Weasel destroying a Leveret—An Evening in an African
Forest—Deer-Stealer—His Method of proceeding described—
Pursuit of him by the Keepers—Address to the Votaries of
Luxury—The Turtle—Effects of the Luxury of the Wealthy
on the Morals and Fate of the Forest Peasant.

WALK THE THIRD.

SUMMER.—MOONLIGHT.

THE glow of eve is faded. Scarce the West
Retains a pale memorial of the beams
That fired it, when the horizontal clouds,
With purple dyes and fissures edged with gold,
Streak'd the calm ether; while through sparkling haze
The faint hills glimmer'd, fainter as their chain
Approach'd the fount of brightness, fainter still
Where sunk the parting orb, and with the sky
In undistinguishable splendor join'd.
Frowning on yonder eminence, the oak
Stretch'd his wild arms, and with contrasting gloom
Athwart the blaze his sable shadows flung.
Milder, still milder, the subsiding glow
Spared the pain'd eyeball, and with sober rays
Quench'd in the gathering dusk refresh'd the sight :
As when remembrance of a buried friend

No longer with intensity of grief
Harrows the soul ; but, mellow'd down by time,
From sadness to composure sooths the breast,
Sacred composure, near allied to joy.
Soon o'er the hill the yellow-tintured moon
Rose through the twilight, and with slanting ray
Gilded the topmost boughs ; while all the vale
And all its sloping boundaries lay wrapt
In shade unvaried. Now with lessening orb
And silver aspect climbing, through the leaves
And thinner spray a tremulous gleam she throws,
Chequering the mossy path beneath our feet.
Round her the stars and planetary balls
With cloudless lustre burn ; not ranged in heaven
With mere design a twinkling aid to yield
To the late-wandering stranger, nor ordain'd
To rule our destinies, as craft averr'd,
And ignorance believed ; thy power, thy love,
Parent of all, they speak : they tell of worlds
Innumerable, warm'd by other suns,
And peopled with innumerable hosts
Of beings, wondrous all, nor less than man
Work of thy hand, and children of thy care !
Ye sparkling isles of light that stud the sea
Of empyrean ether ! Ye abodes
Of unknown myriads, spirits, or in bands

Held of corporeal frame ! Fain would my soul,
Athirst for knowledge unreveal'd to man,
Question your habitants, and fain would hear
A voice responsive from your distant bourn.
Tell, tell me who possess your radiant climes ;
What are their forms, their faculties, their hopes,
Their fears, if subject or to hope or fear ?
What fond pursuits, what animating toils,
Diversify existence with delight ?
Rove they in course aerial unconfined
From sphere to sphere, with interchange of joy
Heightening their mutual bliss ; or dwell they fix'd,
Each in his native solitary orb,
Unconscious of the lot of neighbouring worlds ?
What homage, what returns of grateful love
Yield they to Him who made them ? Stand they fast
In undecaying blessedness, secure
From risk of loss : or tread they yet the stage
Of perilous probation ? Hath Sin won
Conquests through disobedience o'er those hosts ?
In your bright regions yawns the gate of Death ?
Falls he, who falls, for ever ?—Power supreme !
Pardon the aspiring thoughts that would presume
To pierce the veil which throwds from mortal eye
The wonders of thy realms ! Enough, to know
That thou art Lord ! Thy universal love

Pervades Creation ; on each living form
Showers down its proper happiness ; and, when guilt
Wakes thy reluctant vengeance, stays the bolt
Of wrath, and pales its mitigated fire !

While with their heads beneath their ruffled plumes
Conceal'd, the birds that sported during day,
Rest in these sheltering bushes, at whose roots
The vivid worm her nightly spark illumines ;
And couching in that brake, the timorous deer
Slumbers forgetful of each past alarm ;
The tribes of evening issue from their cells,
To animate the dusk. Heard ye the owl
Hoot to her mate responsive ? 'Twas not she
Whom floating on white pinions near his barn
The farmer views well pleased, and bids his boy
Forebear her nest ; but she who, cloth'd in robe
Of unobtrusive brown, regardless flies
Mouse-haunted cornstacks, and the thresher's floor,
And prowls for plunder in the lonely wood.
On leathern wing in changeful jerks the bat
Flitting, and twittering shrill and weak, renews
The wonted chace. Nor is the chace in vain.
For ever and anon the beetle dull
Smites us with sudden stroke, stopping at once
Its heavy hum : while moths of size and form
And motion various, flutter by, with plumes

Less gorgeous, not less delicate, than theirs
 Whose painted wings the noontide flowers adorn.
 Hark ! from yon quivering branch your direst foe,
 Insects of night, its whirring note prolongs *,
 Loud as the sound of busy maiden's wheel :
 Then with expanded beak, and throat enlarged
 Even to its utmost stretch, its customary food
 Pursues voracious. Thus from Zembla's deep
 On warmer climes when herring armies † pour

* The goatfucker. "This bird agrees with the swallow tribe in food, and in the manner of taking it; differs in the time of preying, flying only by night; so with some justice may be called a nocturnal swallow. It feeds on moths, gnats, dorrs, or chaffers; from which Charlton calls it a Dorr-hawk; its food being entirely that species of beetle during the month of July. —Scopoli seems to credit the report of its sucking the teats of goats; an error delivered down from the days of Aristotle. Its notes are most singular; the loudest so much resembles that of a large spinning-wheel, that the Welch call this bird aderyn y droell, or the wheel-bird. It begins its song most punctually on the close of day, sitting usually on a bare bough. The noise is so very violent, as to give a sensible vibration to any little building it chanceth to alight on, and emit this species of note." Pennant's British Zoology, vol. i. p. 416, 417. See also White's Naturalist's Calendar, p. 79.

† The winter habitation of the herrings is the sea within the Arctic circle. "This mighty army," says Mr. Pennant (British Zoology, 4th ed. vol. iii. p. 336, 337), "begins to put itself in motion in the spring. We distinguish this vast body by that name;

The living tide of plenty ; to the sun
 With gold and green and azure many a league
 When ocean glitters like a field of gems,
 Gay as the bow of heaven, and burns by night
 In every billow with phosphoric fire ;
 Their march innumerable foes attend. Behold,
 In light-wing'd squadrons, gulls of every name,
 Screaming discordant, o'er the surface hang,
 And ceaseless stoop for prey. Lo ! gannets huge

“ for the word *herring* is derived from the German *beer*, an army, to
 “ express their numbers. It is divided into distinct columns of five
 “ or six miles in length, and three or four in breadth.” The same
 author, in his *Tour in Scotland*, 1772, 2d ed. p. 373, 374, observes
 further: “ In a fine day, when the fish appear near the surface,
 “ they exhibit an amazing brilliancy of colours. All the various
 “ coruscations that dart from the diamond, sapphire, and emerald,
 “ enrich their track ; but during night, if they play on the sur-
 “ face, the sea appears on fire, luminous as the brightest phos-
 “ phorus.—The signs of the arrival of the herrings are flocks of
 “ gulls, which catch up the fish while they skim on the surface,
 “ and of gannets, which plunge and bring them up from confi-
 “ derable depths. Codfish, haddocks, and dogfish follow the
 “ herrings in vast multitudes ; whales, pollacks, and porpoises
 “ are added to the number of their foes : these follow in droves ;
 “ the whales deliberately, opening their vast mouths, taking them
 “ in by hundreds. These monsters keep on the outside ; for the
 “ body of the phalanx of herrings is so thick as to be impene-
 “ trable.”

And ospreys *, plunging from their cloudy height
 With leaden fall precipitate, the waves
 Cleave with deep-dashing breast, and labouring rise,
 Talons and beak o'erloaded : while beneath
 Monsters marine with sanguine inroad gore
 The loofer files ; and, floating vast, the whale
 Infatiate lops the impenetrable host,
 Unbars his mighty jaws, close-crowded troops
 Ingulfs at once, and clasps the gates of death.
 Fresh from its den, yon hollow trunk, behold
 The wild-cat, deadliest of the savage tribes
 That roam in British forest ; wont on high
 To seize the rapid squirrel, or by guile
 Pluck from her nest the unsuspecting dove,
 Or to the ground descending thin the race
 That bores the sandy warren. Thus from sea
 To sea, from shore to shore, athirst for spoil,

* “ The osprey feeds chiefly on fish, taking them in the same
 “ manner as the sea-eagle does, by precipitating itself on them —
 “ The Italians compare the violent descent of this bird on its prey
 “ to the fall of lead into water, and call it *augusta piumbina*, the
 “ leaden-eagle.” Brit. Zool. 4th edit. vol. i. p. 175. The sea-
 eagle is thus finely characterised by Pliny: “ *Supereſt haliaëtos,*
 “ *clariffimâ oculorum acie, librans ex alto feſe, viſoque in mari*
 “ *piſce, præceps in eum ruens, & diſcuſſis pectore aquis rapiens.*”
 On the ſimilar habits of the gannet, ſee Brit. Zool. vol. ii. p. 617.

The pirate steers ; now chafes o'er the wave
The merchantman in ever-changing course
Tacking in vain ; now lands the midnight crew
Havock and flame through some defenceless town
To spread ; now, braving noon's indignant eye,
Sacks the lone village : scatter'd o'er the plains
To every wind, the shepherds pant ; and oft
Snatching a glance reverted, mark the smoke
And fiery gleam that tell the tale of woe.
See from his cave beneath the brambly bank
The fox glide forth, scenting the feather'd prey
Perch'd at the neighbouring cottage. Creeping slow
The weasel, and in silence, through the fern
Steals on the dozing leveret. From her seat
She starts, and bears away the assailant fix'd
Fast to her neck, and from the flowing vein
Sucking the vital current. Lo, she falls.
The puny murderer slinks into the brake
From the drain'd carcass, fated with the blood.

Amid the nightly prowlers of thy wilds,
Britain, man walks serene : in all their tribes
None found to bid him tremble, none to aim
Talon or fang against their rightful lord.
O wretched he, whom Senegambian shades
Inclose at eve ! He, while a vault of flame
Smote on his brow, and scorch'd his gasping throat,

Day after day through sandy oceans toil'd,
Where deathlike silence brooded o'er the waste,
And boundless space seem'd but a larger grave:
No sign that ever foot the burning earth
Had track'd, or life inhaled the vapoury fire,
Save when some camel's bleaching ribs he past,
Or corse of long-lost pilgrim parch'd to stone.
If to a bordering forest, when the sun
Kindles the west, his weary course draw nigh;
Soon as the orb its last red crescent dips,
At once the lion's desert-shaking roar,
The gaunt hyena's shriek, the panther's growl,
And yells of every tone that breathes dismay
Strain'd from unnumber'd throats athirst for blood,
Join dissonant: with serpent hiss the gloom
Quivers: the herded elephants advance
With thundering flock, and through opposing woods
Crush their wide way. Now the brief twilight fades:
In agony he shudders; through the dusk
Sees fiery eyeballs glare; and hears the rout
Of countless antelopes, than tropic storms
More fleet, rush headlong from the gripe of death;
Hears famish'd monsters panting in the chace,
And cries and groans proclaim the arrested flight
Of victim after victim. Stretch'd on earth,
Each limb with icy dread convulsed, he lies,

Lies powerless, hopeless : and with vain regret
Sighs for the horrors of the fervid noon,
Where deathlike silence brooded o'er the wild,
And boundless space seem'd but a larger grave ;
Where late the camel's bleaching ribs he past,
And corse of long-lost pilgrim parch'd to stone.
O wretch, whom noon shall never light again !

Why rush'd that horseman with impetuous course
Across the glade, still looking back ? Why shook
The forest with the deep-toned bloodhound's roar ?
I know his deeds. Ere long on yonder plain
Again shall we behold him : though he strive
His chasers to mislead, and round these banks
Artful his circuit takes, there will he seek
The outlet of the wild. This day at noon
With staff and halter in his hand he stray'd
As watchful of the grazing tribes ; and seem'd
An herdsman bent his wandering colt to find,
And from the scanty common lead him home
To more abundant pasture. Other thoughts
Lay lurking in his breast. From prying gaze
Within the hollow lining of his coat
Cover'd, the musket by malignant art
For depredation form'd, in separate lengths
Disjointed, as musician parts his flute,
He bore. With never-erring skill, the fruit

Mature of long experience, in the crowd
The well-fed buck he mark'd; singling at once
The victim, as each herb of flavour choice
With sapient nose oft shifting o'er the plain
He cropp'd, unconscious of impending fate.
Perch'd on the summit of the blasted oak
The raven eyed him (often had she traced
His purpose), and in silence ominous
Waited her offal portion of the prey.
Meanwhile, a shot delusive, in the wood
At distance due by fly confederate fired,
Alarm'd the keeper's ear. Instant he urged
From glade to glade the vain pursuit, and left
The endanger'd spot unguarded. The safe hour
The plunderer seized; the tube with speed restored
To native shape he charged, levell'd his aim,
And drew the trigger. Clang'd the steel, and flash'd
Destruction. Swift he dragg'd the bleeding spoil,
And plung'd the quivering limbs and branched crest
Deep in the brake, and fled. Bold he return'd,
When twilight lent to guilt her dubious veil,
At eve, prepar'd his booty to convey
To distant mart, where pamper'd luxury
With indiscriminate rage her dainties buys,
Regardless whence they come, or how procured.
But long, as when impatient nestlings peep,

Wide gaping, o'er their walls of moss, and chide
Clamorous their dam whom search of food delays ;
Long with inquiring stomach shalt thou wait,
O disappointed Alderman ! and strive
To still the cravings of the mighty void
With meaner prey, while sympathetic dread
Suggests the terrors thy purveyor feels !
For, roused by sudden tramlings, ere the load
Is pack'd, across his steed the deer he throws,
And mounts in haste. For now their nightly round
The keepers hold ; and soon the ranging dogs
Sagacious note the deed, and touch the place
Of slaughter. With loud roar they tell the tale ;
And over hill and lawn scenting the blood,
By jolting agitation liquefied,
At intervals still dropping from the wound,
Through all his bends the frightened robber chafe.
Mark where they come : eager behind them sweep
Their masters. From our sight lo all are lost,
Pursuers and pursued. Cross we this knoll,
And meet them as they circle round the skirts
Of that impenetrable wood. There flies
The caitiff ! Nearer, nearer still, the foes
Hang ardent on his steps. And now his form
Shouting they recognize, and fiercer drive
Their steeds. For long suspicious had they guess'd



S. Gilpin del.

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Medford, N. H.

"There he lives"

The Catiff!

Wide gaping, o'er their walls of mofs, and chide
Clamorous their dawn when search of food delays ;
Long with muttering stomach that thou wait,
O disappointed Alderman ! and to see
To fill the cravings of the mighty void
With meager prey, while torn there dead
Suggests the errors thy provoyor tells :
To be waded by sudden scrambling, ere the dead
Is trod, he across his need the deer he throws,
And mounts in haste. For now their mighty round
The keeper's hold, and soon the cowering dogs
Savagely ride the deed, and touch the place
Of slaughter. With loud roar they tell the tale ;
And over hill and lawn tearing the blood,
By jolting agitation liquored,
At intervals still drooping from the wound,
The dogs all but drive the frighted robber chaf;
Maid where they come no longer behind them sweep
Their mad race. From our sight to all are lost,
Pursuers and pursued. Cross ye the knoll,
And meet them, as they circle round the skirt
Of this impenetrable wood. There lies
The coward ! Nearer, nearer falls the foe
Hanging silent on his steps. And now his form
Shouting they recognize, and in fierce drive
Their heads. For long suspicious had they guessed.



Illustration of the scene in the story of the man on horseback, from the book "The Man on Horseback" by the author of "The Man on Horseback" (London: 1854).



His secret wiles ; and oft at dead of night
His cottage had they fought, and, arm'd with force
Of legal claim and just authority,
Entrance demanded, and with patient toil
Explored each dark recess, anxious to meet
Proofs of his rapine : but his wary fraud
Had baffled all their projects. Now his reign
Is closed. Hard prest he drops the deer : the bait
His foes retards not ; on himself they pour
Their utmost speed. Mark, his o'erlaboured horse
Falls headlong ; from its back unhurt he springs,
And plies his nimble feet, and hopes escape.
In vain : the forest shakes him from its woods
Indignant, and bids rouse its slumbering hosts
To view their fires avenged. The keepers grasp
Ends his vain struggles ; while the baying hounds
Leap round him, and, with rage and triumph flush'd,
Scarce from his quivering limbs their fangs refrain.

Ye sons of luxury, direr foe to man
Than sword or pestilential vapour, blush
And tremble as this tale of truth ye read,
Blush for your shame, and tremble for your guilt !
Be it enough that earth's remotest bounds,
That polar shores and equinoctial waves
Pay tribute to your board : be it enough
That at your beck in stifling dungeon pent,

Like Guinea's injured sons, o'er seas unknown
Wasted with pain the famish'd turtle weeps
Its miserable voyage ; at your beck
Stretch'd out for butchery feels its shelly mail
Rent from the flesh, of agonising life
Tenacious, while each mangled fragment heaves,
And crawling fibres quiver on the floor.
Spare yet the innocence of forests, spare
The untutor'd peasant ; lure him not to flight
The majesty of law.—Have ye then sped,
Search'd out his weakness, and with fraudulent gold
Sapp'd his integrity ? Lo, train'd by crime
To crime, ere long he aims at nobler spoil ;
Plunders the fold, drives off the unguarded steed,
Arrests the traveller, writhes the midnight lock,
With murderous hand the couch of sleep invades ;
Till, wearied by the deeds ye first inspired,
Avenging justice sweeps him from the earth.

WALK THE FOURTH.

ARGUMENT.

Address to Autumn—An Autumnal Morning—Fieldfares—Address to them—Appearance of a Forest in Autumn superior to its Effect either in Spring or in Summer—Landscape-Painters invited to study Chasteness and Harmony of colouring, and Breadth and Proportion of Light and Shade, in Forests—Illustration of the latter Subject from the Eruption of a Volcano—Autumnal Harmony of Nature further exemplified—The Woodcock—Deer waiting for falling Acorns—The Golden-crested Wren—Cottagers collecting Fuel—An old Oak blown down—Contrast of wooded Hills near at Hand, in Sunshine, with a flat Distance in deep Shadow—The Heron—A distant Shower—Dovedale—Tutbury Castle—Mary Queen of Scots—John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster—The Minstrel—The Love of Forests natural to Man—Mode in which surviving Friends have praised departed Genius—Praise of Forests—Author of the Task—Autumn originally unknown—Eternal Spring shall resume her Reign.

WALK THE FOURTH.

AUTUMN.

AUTUMN, I hail thy steps ! On yonder knoll
Thou standest ; not as in Trinacrian fields,
Thy crown a wheaten wreath, thy robe embofs'd
With golden sickles, jocund thou survey'st
The reaper train ; not as on Gallic hills,
Thy brow with vine-leaves mantled, thy attire
Purple with clusters, and its verge with fruit
From the pale olive broider'd, thou art wont
To meet the peasant at his early toil ;
But clad as best becomes a sylvan lord.
An oaken chaplet, with resplendent hues
By thy own pencil warm'd, and gemm'd with knots
Of woodland berries, twines thy auburn hair.
Broad pictured on thy many-colour'd vest,
Shade beyond shade, a mimic forest glows,
With birds innumerable throng'd. Part soar aloft,

Plowing in steady line their trackless way,
Mix'd with the clouds, as scenting from afar
The vernal gale : their comrades ope their wings
In act to follow. Part with languid air
And folded plumes, as from a toilsome flight
Yet unrecruited, from the topmost boughs
Explore the glades unknown ; or, by the call
Of hunger long unsatisfied aroused,
Pluck the rich harvest of the fruitful wood.
On yonder knoll thou pausest ! O'er the groves
As slowly waves thy hand, a deeper tinge
Of stains ethereal, brightening every green,
Follows its course. But when thy lifted arm
Swift as in anger moves, the shuddering woods,
Smit with electric horror, prone to earth
Their withering glories pour : the rising blast
Groans as it whirls the sylvan deluge wide,
And hills and plains in leafy billows roll.

Long on thy progress, Autumn, shall my feet
Attend obedient ! O'er the unclouded sky,
The forest world of shade, the gleamy vales,
And sunny lawns, and streams in hazy light
Glittering, when thy peculiar stillness reigns,
As nature kept a sabbath ; when the leaf
Shed from the aerial spray scarce quivering drops
Through the lull'd atmosphere, be mine to hail

Thy noon's unruffled calm. And when thy winds
Prefageful, ere the brooding storms advance,
Sweep through the upper air; be mine at eve
To climb yon steep, and wandering in its groves,
Groves yet umbrageous, listen while the gale,
Unfelt by me, sounds in their shadowy tops,
As through a distant region borne, and seems
To tell the converse of another world.

And when thy tempests darken earth and heaven,
And lash the straining wood; when eddying wild,
Dense as the snow-flakes which the unwearied North
Shakes on the buried cliffs of Labrador,
The flood of leaves descends; then be it mine
Beneath the safeguard of a close retreat
To mark thy vengeful arm, and hear thy shout
Impatient on the bands of Winter call
To haste and seize the desolated year.

Mild is thy brow this morn. A gentle frost
Spangles with icy dew the grass. The rime
Floats thin diffused in air; not as condensed
By wintry vapour its impervious fog
Blots out the neighbouring covert, every twig
Thickening with feathery silver, and the locks
Of peasant wilder'd in the dazzling gloom;
But twinkling in the sun its lucid veil
Softens each harder outline, and apace

Before the ascending radiance melts away.
Where in the hollow footsteps of the herd
The shower's cool reliques stagnate, crystal shoots
Start from the sides ; and intersecting oft,
And link'd in union, while the bibulous earth
Still from beneath the liquid prop withdraws,
Hang their white network glistening o'er the void.
Lo ! on yon branch, whose naked spray o'ertops
The oak's still clustering shade, the fieldfares fit
Torpida and motionless, yet peering round
Suspicious of deceit. At our approach
They mount, and, loudly chattering from on high,
Bid the wild woods of human guile beware.

Ye strangers *, banish'd from your native glades,
Where tyrant Frost with Famine leagued proclaims,
" Who lingers, dies ;" with many a risk ye gain
The privilege to breath our softer air,
And glean our sylvan berries. O'er the breadth
Of ocean from relentless skies, from wastes
By winter petrified, from forests whelm'd
Beneath their glittering load, ye come to ask

* Fieldfares migrate hither in autumn from the northern parts of Europe, being forced thence by the excessive rigour of the season in those regions. See Pennant's *British Zoology*, vol. i. p. 304.

A tranfient hofpitality. Nor force
Nor fraud ye meditate : yet, roused at once
By the firft murmur of your diftant wings,
The kite, the buzzard, and each hooked beak
And griping talon thirfteth for your blood.
The fchoolboy, from his irkfome toil fet free,
Proud of the gun now firft poffefs'd, on you
The firft rude effort of defftruction tries.
He marks your ftation, fleals beneath the fhade,
Scarce dares with long-fufpended ftep to prefs
The ground, left leaves fhould ruffle ; trembles, pants,
With hope, and fear ; his difconcerted aim
Renews ; with faltering hand the trigger draws,
And at the fudden thunder farts difmay'd.
Even the dull ruftic as he plods along
By hedgerow fide, or in the foreft roves,
Obferves you, as ye pick your fcanty food,
And whirls the dangerous pebble. What can guard,
Ye unoffending helpless vifitants,
From fnares and death your perfecuted tribes ?
He, who upholds the archangels : He, who marks
With omniprefent eye the fmalleff form
That lives, with arm omnipotent fufains :
He, who infpired your flight from fnow-clad wafes
To happier fhores unknown ; and from the depths
Of fin and mifery for defponding man

Has paved a path in mercy, and with voice
Of love divine bids the repentant soul
Rise heir of heaven, nor dread the gulph of death.

How richly varied is the scene ! In vain
Spring with her emerald verdure, and the tints
Of bloom from every tree and shrub and herb
Breathing its odour ; Summer's hand in vain,
Thickening with greens mature the wood, with
wreaths

Of pendent woodbine linking bush to bush,
And scattering o'er the bank her blossom'd furze
Ardent with gold, would emulate the charms
Of waning Autumn. What though one brief night
Of premature severity, one blast
Whirling the fleety hail, would strip the boughs,
As pestilence the crowded city thins ?
What though already on yon windy brow
The lime and ash with unresisting fear
Their station have deserted ? Unsubdued
The mighty forest rises, and displays
His radiant files. Seize we the present hour,
And view the fleeting glories ere they fade.
Mark the nice harmony which blends the whole
In one congenial mass, brilliant, yet chaste,
With every dye that stains the withering leaf
Glowing, yet not discordant. Hither come,

Ye sons of imitative art *, who hang
The fictions of your pencils on our walls,
And call them landscapes : where incongruous hues
Seem their constrain'd vicinity to mourn ;
Where gaudy green with gaudy yellow vies,
And blues and reds with adverse aspect glare.
Here deign to learn from nature. Hither come,
Ye sons of imitative art, who spot
With unconnected and unnumber'd lights
Your motley canvas ; where the eye in vain
Longs for a resting-place, and vainly strives
To trace the dim design, mid dazzling specks
And universal glitter undescried.
Here deign to learn from nature : here, though late,
Learn the peculiar majesty which crowns
The forest, when the slowly passing clouds
Triple † preponderance of shadow spread,

* It is scarcely necessary to say that the following lines refer only to the works of some particular painters, and are by no means intended to convey indiscriminate censure.

† The painters most skilled in the management of light generally allow not above one quarter of the picture for the lights, including in this portion both the principal and secondary lights ; another quarter is as dark as possible ; the remaining half in middle tint. Sir Joshua Reynolds's Notes on Mr. Mason's Translation of Dufresnoy's Art of Painting, p. 98.

And separate * the broad collected lights
With corresponding gloom ; whether, beneath
These oaks, that o'er the darken'd foreground hang,
The illumined valley shines, the pasturing deer ;
Or yon recess admits the fronting ray
Between its dusky barriers ; or a gleam,
Stretch'd o'er the tufted surface of the woods,
Deepens the blackness of contiguous shade.

Thus with the rays of noon when Etna blends
Her vollied flame, nor with contrasting depth
Of smoke and fulphurous steam the glare furrounds,
Scarce seen, scarce fear'd, the sickly blaze expires.
Wouldst thou survey her terrors ? Wait the hour,
When from her caves projected Stygian clouds

* In the grouping of lights there should be a superiority of one over the rest ; they should be separated, and varied in their shapes ; and there should not be less than three lights. The secondary lights ought, for the sake of harmony and union, to be of nearly equal brightness, though not of equal magnitude, with the principal. Sir J. Reynolds's Notes on Dufresnoy, p. 96. Yet neither any one of these secondary lights, nor all of them together, must come into any degree of competition with the principal mass of light. Sir J. Reynolds's Seven Discourses, p. 106. The highest finishing is labour in vain, unless at the same time there be preserved a breadth of light and shadow—the slightest sketch, where this breadth is preserved, will have effect. Notes on Dufresnoy, p. 99.

Incessant rise, and air, earth, sea involve
 In more than midnight gloom. Then mark the burst
 Of splendor from the glowing crater start
 To heaven; behold the electric flash oblique *
 Break through the darkness; view the exploded rocks †
 Trail their long light; prone down the mountain's side
 Watch the red deluge o'er the works of man,
 Hamlet and city, mead and cultured plain,
 With indiscriminate destruction roll'd,

* Sir William Hamilton, in his *Observations on Mount Etna, Vesuvius, and other Volcanos*, mentions this phenomenon as a constant attendant on great eruptions. "Small ashes fell all day at Naples. They issued from the crater of the Volcano, and formed a vast column as black as the mountain itself, so that the shadow of it was marked out on the surface of the sea. Continued flashes of forked or zigzag lightning shot from this black column." Ed. 2d, p. 37. See also p. 38, 39, and the note, and p. 46. 85. "I find in all the accounts of great eruptions mention made of this sort of lightning, which is distinguished here by the name of Ferilli." lb. p. 164.

† "I have seen stones of an enormous size shot up to a great height from Vesuvius. In 1767 a solid stone, measuring twelve feet in height and forty-five in circumference, was thrown a quarter of a mile from the crater." Sir William Hamilton's *Observations*, p. 49, note. He adds that "the eruption of 1767 was very mild in comparison with some others."

Plunge headlong into ocean. Ocean's waves,
 Loud hissing, from the invading fires recoil *:
 Catania's bulwarks rock; with tottering crest
 Thy towers, pale Syracuse, the conflict hear;
 And Rhegium shudders at the reflux tide.

Nature, in all her works harmonious, blends

* The Earl of Winchelsea, in his account of the eruption of Mount Etna in 1669, quoted by Sir William Hamilton, (*Observations*, p. 60,) describes the stream of lava flowing upon the mountain as fifteen miles in length, and seven in breadth. "It may be termed," he proceeds, "an inundation of fire, cinders, and burning stones, burning with that rage as to advance into the sea six hundred yards, and that to a mile in breadth; which I saw. And that which did augment my admiration was to see in the sea this matter like ragged rocks burning in four fathoms water, two fathoms higher than the sea itself; some parts liquid, and throwing off the stones about it; which like a crust of a vast bigness, and red hot, fell into the sea every moment in some place or other, causing a great and horrible noise, smoke, and hissing in the sea."

During the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in June and July 1794, the lava ran from the side of the mountain in a torrent half a mile wide, and from twelve to forty feet high, through the middle of the town of Torre del Greco: destroying the houses and vineyards in its progress, and forming a new promontory twenty-four feet high, and extending six hundred and twenty-six feet into the sea. See Sir W. Hamilton's account of this eruption delivered to the Royal Society.

Extremes with soft gradation, and with tints
Kindred throughout her changeful robe adorns.
Bounds yon unbroken wood the level plain?
Light groups detach'd and solitary trees
Unite them. Weave yon bushes o'er the hill
Uninterrupted thickets? Furzy brakes
Aspire to meet them. Spreads the furzy brake?
With varying breadth the intruding greenward winds,
And the rude mafs with velvet maze divides.
And lo, even now, when with autumnal gold
She decks the lofty branch, on every twig
Of humbler growth the many-colour'd fruit
Mindful she hangs. With scarlet crown the briar
Glitters: the thorn its ruddy clusters bend:
Scarce can the floe sustain its purple load,
Not yet from taste austere, puckering the lip
And disappointed tongue, by frost reclaim'd;
While from the prickly shoots pale bryony,
Twined round the oft encircled stem, fufpends
Its lucid berries: rich in glossy balls,
Privet's dark fpiques with trembling luftre gleam.
What though yon holly's cold unalter'd green,
That oak embosoming, with contrast harfh
Had met the splendid foil that glows above?
Cinctured with reddening zones, the fertile spray,

Like Indian maiden girt with coral beads *,
 Blends with the sylvan monarch's gorgeous robe
 Tints that his gorgeous robe will not disdain.
 Nor less the ground its hues accordant joins,
 With faded leaves bestrewn, and floating wings
 Of russet fern o'ershadow'd, whence upstarts
 The woodcock : she who in Norwegian dell,
 Or birchen glade Lapponian, near the swamp
 Suck'd from the spongy soil the prey, to cheer
 Her tawny young ; till Winter's icy car,
 On Summer's step close † pressing, from his realm
 Warn'd her, and earth her probing beak repell'd.

As when the gunner, in his stubbly way
 Pausing his arms afresh to prime, suspends
 The lifted flask, and turns his ready ear,
 If to her brood the long-lost partridge call :
 Or as, when midnight stills the Atlantic wave,
 The pilot, if a sound that seems to tell
 Of distant breakers float upon the breeze,
 Stands motionless in deep attention lost :
 Beneath yon oak why listening pause the deer ?

* " The villas with which London stands begirt,

" Like a swarth Indian with his belt of beads." COWPER.

† Spring and Autumn are hardly known to the Laplanders.—
 Scheffer's History of Lapland, p. 61.

They wait the falling acorn. Hark ! it leaps
From the bare bank. Obedient to the sound
At once they turn, and seize it ; then resume
Their patient stand, and with the rising gale.
Aloft in mazy course the golden wren *
Sports on the boughs ; she who her slender form
Vaunting, and radiant crest, half dares to vie
With those gay wanderers †, whose effulgent wings ;
With insect hum still flutter o'er the pride
Of Indian gardens, while the hollow tongue
Explores the flower, and drains the honied juice.

Now chiller evenings and the near approach
Of winter from the anxious cottage draw
Yon group in search of fuel. Youthful hands
Gather the scatter'd sticks ; or wield the pole

* The golden-crested wren is the least of British birds. It may readily be distinguished, not only by its size, but by the beautiful scarlet mark on the head, bounded on each side by a yellow line. It frequents woods, and is found principally on oak trees. Though so small a bird, it endures our winters. Pennant's British Zoology, vol. i. p. 379, 380.

† " Humming-birds subsist on the nectar or sweet juice of flowers—they never settle on a flower during the action of extracting the juice ; but flutter continually like bees, moving their wings very quick, and making a humming noise, whence their name." Latham's Synopsis of Birds, p. 770. On the structure of the tongue of the humming-bird, see *ibid.* p. 745.

Arm'd with light sickle, and the mouldering bough
Pluck down with tiptoe efforts oft renew'd :
While the dead stump that sturdy peasant hews ;
Or, looking watchful round lest prying eyes
Observe him, from the oak by tempests torn
Rends off the shiver'd ruin with its load
Of leafy spray. Backward he throws his weight,
And tugs with iron grasp : in vain the branch
Recoils with start elastic, and in vain
Still by tough splinters to the trunk adheres.
Meantime yon boy in wanton mischief tears
The ivy twisted in contortions rude
Round the tall maple, and the stem divides
With stroke malicious. Soon the verdant mass,
Robb'd of its wonted nutriment, shall fade.
Yet shall the lifeless tendrils still maintain
Their grasp ; and, deaf to Spring's reviving call,
To May's bright greens a dusky foil oppose.

Stranger, who gazest on its tangled bower,
Where oft the owl, impatient of the blaze
Pour'd from meridian ardours, dozed in gloom
Impenetrable, then with frightened wing
Long time heard labouring in the deep recess
Broke forth, when clamorous children saunter'd by ;
Mourn'st thou its ruin'd honours ? Hither turn,
And mark where, never more to vernal suns

And showers responsive, prostrate on the earth
A nobler ruin lies, yon oak, the boast
Of unrecorded centuries. With hound
And horn when Tudor through these coverts urged
His game, the monarch oft in mid pursuit
Stopp'd short; and to his nobles wondering round
Pointed this mighty trunk, with royal praise
Dwelt on its growth majestic, and forgot,
Enraptured with its shade, the flying deer.
Ages roll'd on; and still its awful crest
In shadowy state above the forest rose:
And still the traveller with admiring gaze
Hail'd from afar the sovereign of the wood.
But Time, the foe who never knew despair,
Who crush'd proud Troy, who cleft thy bulwarks,
Rome,

And fees with scorn the pilgrim search in vain
The spot where Babel stood, his storms array'd,
Summon'd his mildews from the venom'd East,
Breathed his green damps, the giant fabric shook,
Curtail'd its boughs, its leafy honours thinn'd,
And mined its inmost heart. Yet long it met
The war, sore bruised but dauntless; and its arms,
Shiver'd and bleach'd, as in defiance rear'd,
Frowning with semblance of primæval strength.

Till, as a state by slow corruption fapp'd,
Whence one by one the cankering pest withdraws
Each buttress of its grandeur, at the root
Decay'd it totter'd. The autumnal blast
Snapp'd the few slender strings that fix'd the shell,
Sad remnant of the ponderous trunk. The crash
Earth heard, and shudder'd ; mindful of the hour
Foredoom'd ere time began, when all her pomp,
The boast of nature and the pride of art,
Shall sink for ever ; when herself shall hear
The knell that calls her to her fiery grave,
Drink the last glimmerings of the expiring sun,
Close her last round, and fill her place no more.

How forcible the contrast ! Light and gloom,
Beauty and grandeur with contending powers
Heighten the landscape ! On the tufted heads
Of these steep woods, that hurry down the slope
With headlong plunge eager to meet the vale,
A flood of radiance rests, with brighter hues
Bids Autumn glow, and tells each break that marks
The indented surface : while, as mighty fleets
From Indian shore deep-laden stretch their wings
Athwart the shadowy main, yon low-hung clouds
O'er hamlets faint, and dim-discover'd meads,
And village towers above the encircling trees

Peering obscure, in pomp of darkness float,
And lurid purple chills the expanse beneath.
There, where in curves now lost, now traced again,
A wandering lustre, as from rippling streams
Reflected, plays ambiguous, oft the heron,
Posted in Dove's rich meads, with patient guile
And pale gray plumes with watery blue suffused
Stands like a shadow : then with out-stretch'd neck,
While near with sidelong gait the fowler creeps,
Rises, and, steering to the distant fen,
Shrieks from on high, and flaps her solemn wing.
Hence northward to yon ridgy heights the eye
Glances at large. Lo their magnetic tops
Have seized the passing cloud : the torrent rain
Smokes on their deluged sides. The shower drives on :
Hill after hill successive disappears
Before the encroaching vapour. Lost awhile,
They mingle with the sky : now far behind
Gradual emerge, obscurely through the rear
Of the spent storm discern'd ; now glimmer faint
With watery beams ; now through the freshen'd air
Swell on the sight, and laugh in cloudless day.
There, mid disjointed cliffs and tranquil shades,
Low in his native dale, with stream as pure
As melts from Alpine snows Dove laves his rocks

Wild as by magic planted, yet with grace *
Of symmetry arranged; now foaming darts
Along the stony channel, tufted isles
Now circles, now with glassy surface calm
Reflects the impending glories of his hills.
There Contemplation at the fall of eve,
By gurgling waters lull'd, with downcast gaze
Pores on each insect form, that skims the deep,
Each grassy blade, that vibrates in the stream :
Then the green slopes, the craggy barrier views,
And sylvan gloom sequester'd : then to heaven
Lifts an adoring glance, and thinks on Thee,
Maker of all that lives, of all that, void
Of life, with beauty charms, with grandeur awes,
Dims with admiring gratitude the eye,
With holy rapture swells the kindling heart.
Or turn we southward, where on yonder cliff
Dove, o'er thy ampler wave projecting shine

* " From the description given of Dovedale, even by men of taste, we had conceived it to be a scene rather of curiosity than of beauty. We supposed the rocks were formed into the most fantastic shapes; and expected to see a gigantic display of all the conic sections. But we were agreeably deceived. The whole composition is chaste, and picturesquely beautiful, in a high degree." Mr. Gilpin's *Observations on the Mountains and Lakes of Cumberland*, &c. vol. ii. p. 228.

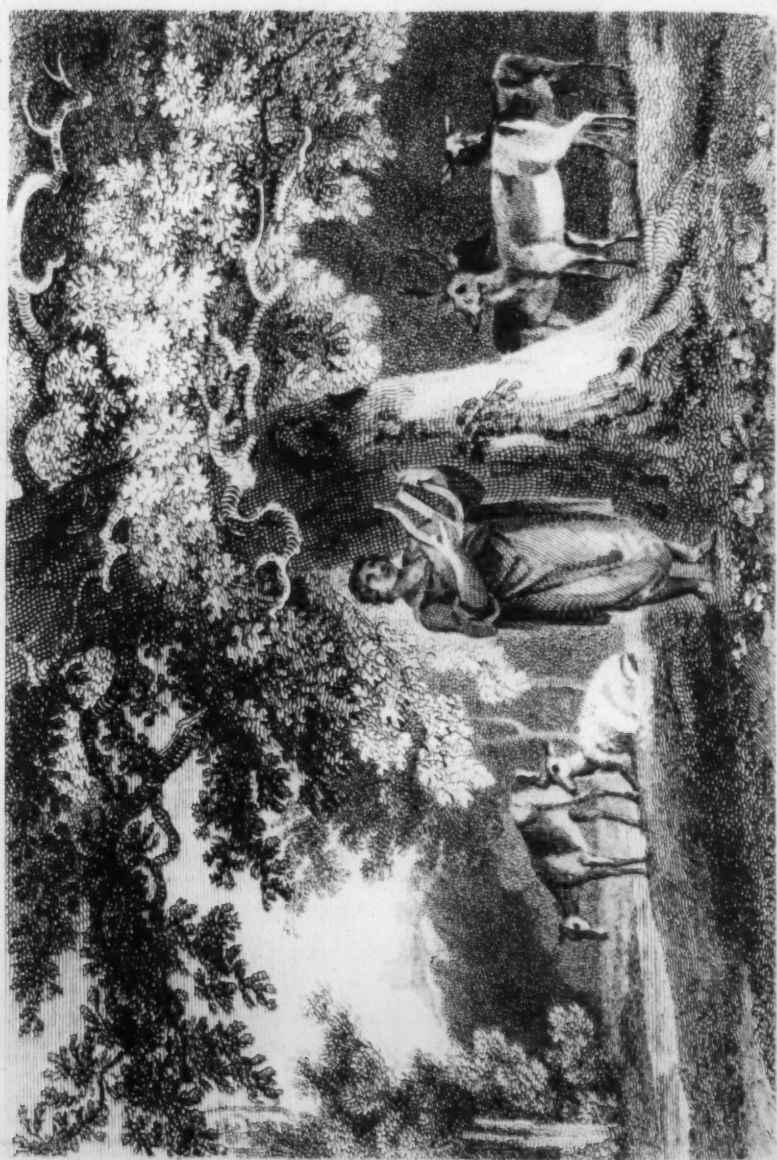
Those ivy-mantled towers *; towers once with sighs
Sadden'd of captive Mary, jocund once
With minstrelsy, when Lancaster convened
The throng of barons in his festive hall.
Stretch'd in her cell with pallid cheek the Queen,
And tears fast dropping from her beamless eyes,
Wore the long months of grief. With anguish faint
If ever the fresh gale she sought to breathe;
The fullen portal thundering as it closed,
The huge portcullis rushing from above,
The frowning battlement and guarded wall,
Prescribed her limits. Through the stony chink,
Went on the near approaching foe to pour
The arrowy storm, on these wild banks she gazed:
While Fancy, minister of woe, with hand
Officious to her view presented still
Gay troops of forest deer unprison'd airs
Inhaling, and as frolic sport inspired,
Bounding unfetter'd. To new dungeon tost
From dungeon, her unpitying rival's ear
With fruitless prayer she plied. The cold excuse,
The taunt, the studied silence of neglect,

* Tutbury Castle, once the prison of Mary Queen of Scots;
and in earlier times the residence of John of Gaunt.

Silence than cold evasion and than taunt
More keen, she bore : yet dreams of brighter hours
Still cherish'd ; and still hoped, and hoped in vain,
To burst the chains which envious hate had twined ;
Till Freedom on the fable scaffold's height
Stood hand in hand with all-subduing Death,
To end her bondage. Other scenes the bard
Crown'd with high harpings ; when unnumber'd
lights

Illumed the fretted roof, the pendent arms
That deck'd the wall ; and glowing through the rows
Of adverse windows, where the crystal plain
Art's richest tracery spread, proclaim'd afar
The princely feast of Lancaster. He rose :
Mirth ceased her tumult ; every sound was hush'd ;
All from their seats bent forward. Age and youth,
Warriors, and gorgeous dames enraptured heard
The tale of antient years, the tale of arms
In glorious cause triumphant : then allured
To sadder themes, with misty eyeballs learn'd
Of youths before an aged parent's face
In their first onset slain ; or from the sword
Of hostile inroad while on foamy steeds
They bore the plighted objects of their love,
Headlong from midnight precipices hurl'd,
Or plunged in trackless bogs, absorb'd, and lost.





Off as his lord, to grace the festal day,
When knight-hood's champions on the filled field
Shout, and couch in emulous career the lance;
Bade him the song prepare: these sylvan depths,
These glades, at early dawn he pierce'd, and hung
Even on yon oak his lute; then musing stray'd;
Then vocal tried the meditated lay,
And swept the strings; while echo swell'd the chords
Of harmony divine; and lowly deer,
Thoughtless of food, in listening wonder gaz'd.
Man loves the forest. To the general theme
My breast is not a stranger. I could love
At morn, at noon, at eve, by lunar ray,
In each returning season, through your shades,
Ye reverend woods! could visit every dell,
Each hill, each breezy lawn, each wandering brook,
And bid the world admire: and when at last
The song were closed, each magic spot again
Could seek, and tell again of all its charms.
But let me check the partial trait, nor swell
With indignant note and trivial praise
The long description; lest attending youth
And virgin innocence outwearied loathe
The injudicious rapture, and condemn
What else had touch'd the hearts. When Genius dies
(I speak what Albion knows), surviving friends,



Oft as his lord, to grace the festal day,
When knighthood's champions on the lifted field
Should couch in emulous career the lance,
Bade him the song prepare ; these sylvan depths,
These glades at early dawn he pierced, and hung
Even on yon oak his lyre : then musing stray'd ;
Then vocal tried the meditated lay,
And swept the strings ; while echo swell'd the chords
Of harmony divine, and flocking deer,
Thoughtless of food, in listening wonder gazed.

Man loves the forest. To the general flame
My breast is not a stranger. I could rove
At morn, at noon, at eve, by lunar ray,
In each returning season, through your shades,
Ye reverend woods ! could visit every dell,
Each hill, each breezy lawn, each wandering brook,
And bid the world admire ; and when at last
The song were closed, each magic spot again
Could seek, and tell again of all its charms.
But let me check the partial strain, nor swell
With indiscriminate and trivial praise
The long description ; lest attending youth
And virgin innocence outwearied loathe
The injudicious rapture, and contemn
What else had touch'd the heart. When Genius dies
(I speak what Albion knows), surviving friends,

Eager his bright perfections to display
To the last atom, echo through the land
All that he ever did, or ever said,
Or ever thought ; recount the coats he wore,
Who made his wig, who served him with rappee ;
Whether 'twas March, or April, when he told
The story of the pig that cross'd the lane,
And tripp'd the ill-fated huckster in the mire ;
Whether he cream'd his teacup first, or when
'Twas fill'd and sugar'd ; whether trout or pike,
Veal or boil'd chicken, pleased his palate most.
Then for his writings—search each desk and drawer,
Sweep his portfolio, publish every scrap
And demi-scrap he penn'd ; beg, borrow, steal
Each line he scribbled, letter, note, or card,
To order shoes, to countermand a hat,
To bid his servant bottle off the ale,
To make inquiries of a neighbour's cold,
Or ask his company to supper. Thus,
Fools ! with such vile and crumbling trash they build
The pedestal, on which at length they rear
Their huge Colossus, that beneath his weight
'Tis crush'd and ground ; and leaves him dropt aslant,
Scarce raised above the height of common men.
I would not praise you thus, ye forest wilds !
With warm yet sober tints, with pencil true

To just discrimination, yet averse
To load the o'erlabour'd canvas, I would paint
Your choicer scenes. O could I wake the lyre
Like him *, who, lingering on the banks of Ouse,
To nature faithful, and to nature's King,
Pursues the noblest of poetic aims,
That only aim which gives the poet's lay
A title to the meed of genuine praise ;
Who, blending † in his song with honest art
The faithful monitor's and poet's care,
Seeks to delight that he may mend mankind,
And while he captivates exalt the soul !
He sweeps the lyre : one hand excites the strings,
Whence starts each glowing image that presents
Perfect as life the charms that deck the face
Of earth ; the other, with symphonious touch,
Rouses the moral chords that swell the heart,
And lift it to its God. O were my notes,
Ye woodlands, with his sacred fervour warm'd,
Sweet as his music ; to the slave whom pride
Tortures, whom avarice goads, or thirst of power
Long days and sleepless nights hath scorch'd ; to her
Whom dragg'd in triumph at his chariot wheels

* Cowper.

† See Cowper's Poems, edit. 4th, vol. i. p. 179, near the top.

Imperious Dissipation whirls through life,
And hurries from the nursery to the grave
Without one interval of thought, or time
To ask, "Who placed me here; why was I form'd;
"What shall I be hereafter?" I would speak
The calm that stills your wilds, their guest o'erspreads
Diffusive, creeps along the conscious frame,
Bids pause each artery, stays each active limb,
Each rebel passion chains, and through the soul
Breathes holy peace and universal love.
For since the globe first roll'd, in every land
Your shades, ye forests, the deluded heart
To heavenly meditation still have call'd;
And every song, that glorified your God,
Have heard with eager gladness. Ye with joy,
Fresh from his Maker's hand when man arose,
Saw him in wondering homage kneel; ye bade
Your yet unpractised echoes swell the sound
High as the Eternal's throne, when grateful praise
First broke the silence of the new-born world.
Ye, when with bloody arm infuriate Rome,
Pagan or Papal, from the haunts of men
Chased the firm band whom truth forbade to yield,
Crouch to her priests, and worship at her nod:
Ye screen'd their flight, with hospitable gloom
Shelter'd their anguish, and with mingling boughs,

Vocal to prayer, a fylvan fane supplied.
O yet, even yet, your sacred influence breathe,
Oft as I tread your leaf-strewn paths; to rest
Lull each tumultuous wish; with reverent awe
My heart inspire; and, as your stately growth
Pursues its heaven-directed aim, exalt
My thoughts from earth, and point them to the skies!

Man loves the forest. Since in Eden's groves
His fire, yet innocent, enraptured view'd
"Insuperable height of loftiest shade *,"
"Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,"
"A fylvan scene," man has the forest loved.
Those groves no autumn knew: eternal spring
With all the blessings of the varied year
In rich profusion crown'd them. But when Death
Seized on his prey, fall'n man, Destruction stretch'd
Across the woods her sceptre. With the axe
She fells them: with the tempest by the roots
Headlong uptears them: with the scythe of Time
She lays them low: and yearly o'er their boughs
Flings as in scorn a many-colour'd robe;
Then strips the transient pomp, and scoffs the wilds
Naked and chill'd in emblematic death.

* Milton's *Paradise Lost*, book iv. line 138—140.

Yet shall unfading Spring her fway resume
In that new promised earth, promised by voice
Of power unbounded and unfailing truth;
Where by no sin to defolation doom'd,
For sin shall not be there, no storms annoy'd,
No violence ravaged, no decay impair'd,
Thy works, great God, for such thy will, shall stand
Firm through the ages of eternity!

WALK THE FIFTH.

ARGUMENT.

Prognostics of Snow—Man ignorantly repines at its Fall—A Traveller—apprehends a Storm, and previously arms himself to encounter it—is caught by it on the middle of a Forest—The Storm at length ceases—Address to those who are struggling with Difficulties in Life—Patient Hope exemplified.

WALK THE FIFTH.

WINTER.—SNOW.

AT length the snows descend. Her axis thrice
The earth has circled, since the northern blast
Grew keener, veering eastward; and while frost
With richest blue the arch ethereal dyed,
Incumbent on the gray horizon's verge
A settled gloom has hung. This morn, when first
Above the summit of yon oak the sun
With tardy gleam arose, a fleecy shower
Tinging with thin-spread white the frozen brook,
The bareworn track, and close-depastured plain,
Accompanied his course. Ere long he chased
The congregated vapour: yet, while noon
Glow'd with his radiance, from some half-form'd cloud,
Whose filmy veil by careless eyes unseen
Dimm'd, yet scarce dimm'd, the azure vault of heaven,

Descending oft the solitary flake
Foretold the secret purpose of the skies.
Now mid-day warmth declines : dense haze obscures
The turbid atmosphere : the clouds advance,
Not as the vehicles of rain, disposed
In separate masses, and of varying hue ;
Not as the mansions of rebounding hail,
Lurid and dark ; nor those where thunder dwells,
Of wildest forms, scowling with purple dyes,
And 'gainst the nether streams of air propell'd
By their own currents ; but of aspect dun,
Of texture uniform, and blending quick
In one unbroken surface, onward move
In firm array, and load the rising gale.
Athwart the whole expanse of air they stretch
Their dusky mantle. Louder, louder still,
Now pausing, now with hollow swell prolong'd,
The wind exalts his voice ; and sweeping wild
Claps o'er the sounding earth his snowy wings,
And drives through heaven the horizontal storm.
On the fast whitening world impatient man
Gazes repining ; and already views
The plough with forked handles through the drift
Projecting in the unfinish'd furrow rust ;
The oxen doom'd to sloth ; the rapid waste
Of haystack lessening duly morn and eve.

Nor thinks that Heaven, oft kindest when with signs
Of wrath it lowers, sends forth the loaded blast
With merciful commission; bids the snows
Brood genial o'er the glebe, from blighting frost
Shield infant harvest, and the stiffen'd joints
Of beast and wearied hind prepare by rest,
Salubrious though constrain'd, for future toil.

While thus the echoing tempest beats abroad,
Beneath the impervious covert of this wood
Of antient hollies, whose umbrageous heads
The gusts of Autumn have in vain assail'd,
Range we secure, and view the distant scene.

Mark on that road, whose unobstructed course
With long white line the unburied furze divides,
Yon solitary horseman urge his way.
He, not unmindful of the brooding storm,
Ere yet by strong necessity compell'd
Of pressing occupation he exchanged
The blazing hearth, the firm-compacted roof,
For naked forests and uncertain skies,
With wise precaution arm'd himself to meet
The Winter's utmost rage. In silken folds
Twice round his neck the handkerchief he twined.
His legs he cas'd in boots of mighty size,
And strength experienced oft; warm'd through and
through

In chimney-corner ; and with glossy face
Prepared descending torrents to repel,
As roll the round drops from the silvery leaf
Of rain-besprinkled colewort, or the plumes
Of seagull sporting in the broken wave.
Then o'er his limbs the stout great-coat he drew,
With collar raised aloft, and threefold cape
Sweep below sweep in wide concentric curves
Low down his back dependent ; on his breast
The folds he cross'd, and in its destin'd hole
Each straining button fix'd : erect he stood,
Like huge portmanteau on its end uprear'd.
Fearless he sallied forth ; nor yet disdain'd
The heartening draught from tankard capp'd with
foam,

By host officious to the horseblock borne
With steady hand, and eloquently praised ;
While lingering on the step his eye he turn'd
To every wind, and mark'd the embattled clouds
Ranging their squadrons in the fullen East.
How fares he now ? Caught on the middle waste,
Where no deep wood its hospitable gloom
Extends ; no friendly thicket bids him cower
Beneath its tangled roof ; no lonely tree
Prompts him to seek its leeward side, and cleave,
Erect and into narrowest space compress,

To the bare trunk, if haply it may ward
The driving tempest: with bewilder'd haste
Onward he comes. "Hither direct thy speed;
"This sheltering grove—" He hears not! Mark his
head

Oblique, presented to the storm; his hand,
Envelop'd deep beneath the inverted cuff,
Strives to confine, with many a fruitless grasp,
His ever flapping hat; the cold drench'd glove
Clings round the imprison'd fingers. O'er his knees
His coat's broad skirt, scanty now proved too late,
He pulls and pulls impatient, muttering wrath
At pilfering tailors. Baffled and perplex'd,
With joints benumb'd and aching, scarce he holds
The rein, scarce guides the steed with breathless toil
O'erpower'd, and shrinking sideways from the blast.
Behold that steed, with icy mane, and head
Depress'd, and quivering ears now forward bent,
Now backward swiftly thrown, and offering still
Their convex penthouse to the shifting gale;
Behold that steed, on indurated balls
Of snow upraised, like schoolboy rear'd on stilts,
Labour unbalanced: the fallacious prop,
Now this, now that, breaks short: with sudden jerk
He sinks, half falling; and recovering quick
On legs of length unequal reels along.

Scarce on his feat can clinging knees sustain
The trembling rider : while the snow upheaves
In drifts athwart his course projected broad ;
Or o'er the uncover'd gravel rattling sweeps,
Caught up in sudden eddies, and aloft,
Like smoke, in suffocating volumes whirl'd.
The road he quits unwary, wandering wide
O'er the bleak waste, mid brushwood wrapt in snow,
Down rough declivities and fractured banks,
Through miry plashe, cavities unseen,
And bogs of treacherous surface ; till afar
From all that meets his recollection borne,
Dismay'd by hazards scarce escaped, and dread
Of heavier perils imminent, he stands
Dismounted, and aghast. Now Evening draws
Her gathering shades around ; the tempest fierce
Drives fiercer. Chill'd within him sinks his heart,
Panting with quick vibrations. The wild blast
Appall'd he hears, thinks on his wife and babes,
And doubts if ever he shall see them more.
But comfort is at hand ; the skies have spent
In that last gust their fury. From the west
The setting sun with horizontal gleam
Cleaves the dense clouds ; and through the golden
breach
Strikes the scathed oak, whose branches peel'd and bare



Midland Sunday

*Published December 1st 1877 by Cadell & Davies, Strand.
 "the traveller views
 the well-known landmark left to him even his eyes
 chosen many with gratitude."*

S. Gilpin del.

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S. Colver del.



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Gainst the retiring darkness of the storm
With fiery lustre glow. The traveller views
The well-known landmark, lifts to heaven his eyes
Swimming with gratitude, the friendly track
Regains, and speeds exulting on his way.
O ye, whom, struggling on life's craggy road
With obstacles and dangers, secret foes
Supplant, false friends betray, disastrous rage
Of elements, of war, of civil broil
Brings down to Poverty's cold floor, while grief
Preys on the heart, and dims the sinking eye;
Faint not ! There is who rules the storm, whose hand
Feeds the young ravens, nor permits blind chance
To close one sparrow's flagging wing in death.
Trust in the Rock of Ages. Now, even now
He speaks, and all is calm. Or if to prove
Your inmost soul the hurricane still spread
Its licensed ravages, He whispers hope,
Earnest of comfort ; and through blackest night
Bids keen-eyed Faith on heaven's pure sunshine gaze,
And learn the glories of her future home.
So when the son of patience heard the wreck
Of all his fortunes, camels, oxen, flocks,
Sons, daughters, all in one short hour o'erwhelm'd ;
And ere each messenger his tale of grief
Had closed, beheld another still succeed

With wilder eyeballs, cheeks more deadly pale,
More trembling lips, portending heavier woes :
When every limb thy cankering tooth, Disease,
Gnaw'd to the bone : when scoffing friends arraign'd
His uprightness : when she who should have pour'd
Balm on his wounds, his consort, mock'd his pangs
With venom'd taunt—" Still dost thou boast thy
 " faith ?

" Renounce the ungrateful Power thou serv'ft in vain ;

" Defy his malice, shelter'd in the grave——"

His head to earth the sufferer bow'd, with hands
Prest on his bosom ; yet his eyes upraised

In hope to heaven. " Father of all," he cried,

" Thy will be done ! All was thy gift ; thine own

" Thou hast resumed. Blest be thy hand that gave ;

" And—peace, my heart !—blest when it takes away !

" Yet these poor limbs, of swarming worms the spoil,

" New life shall clothe, and rear them from the dust.

" Thou livest, my Redeemer ! At the hour

" In thy decrees ordain'd, careering clouds

" Shall speak thine advent : earth beneath thy tread

" Shall shrink ; this voice shall hymn thy love, these

 " knees

" Adore thy power, these eyes behold their God !"

WALK THE SIXTH.

ARGUMENT.

Address to Winter—A Thaw described—Frost returns—Hannibal ascending the Alps—A Forest Brook traced—The Effects of Frost upon it—The Norwegian Traveller—The Wild-Duck—The Snipe—Cloud on a Mountain—Story of a Forest Youth—Naked Woods—Winter Appearance of the Oak—Ash—Birch—Yew—Ivy—Holly—The Foxglove—Browsing of Deer—Cottage-Children assembling to gather the Branches—Effects of Winter—The never-ceasing Speed of Time compared with the unrelenting Fury of War—A Forest Pool frozen—Disappointment of the Cattle—Captain Monk wintering on the Shore of Hudson's Bay—Lessons inculcated by the several Seasons—The Consequences of neglecting the Voice of Nature and of Revelation—The Deluge—Address to the Supreme Being.

WALK THE SIXTH.

WINTER.—FROST.

WINTER, whom sickness dreads, whom grief abhors,
While yet nor sickness on my head nor grief,
Save with a gentle stroke, her sceptre lays,
All-hail, by me nor dreaded nor abhorr'd !
Whether on thy approach the Southern breeze
Dims with blue damps the pallid face of day ;
Or at thy word the cloud-dispelling North,
Opening the depths of ether, depths unpierced
By Summer's eagle gaze, the brow of night
Binds with new gems, and arms with keener fire :
Whether on whirlwind pinions through the roar
Of torrent rains, or arrowy fleet, or hail
With crystal bullets shattering blade and branch,
Thy car sweeps onward ; or with noiseless wings,
While not a breath thy flagging standard moves,
Cleaves the still flood of prone-descending snows :
Whether, on earth impressed, thy deadening foot

The land to iron chills, the floods to stone;
 Or vapoury warmth escapes thy changeful lips,
 In universal thaw till Nature melts,
 While Danube turbid from dissolving hills
 Appals the Austrian, and from Wyddfa's brow *
 The pale Snowdonian oft at dead of night
 Hears the disparted fragment thunder down,
 And views at peep of day its yawning course
 Plow'd in long ruin through the sloping wood;
 Still has thy varied aspect charms for me.
 Still hast thou charms for those whose mental eye
 Views thee from Him, who rules the unnumber'd worlds,
 Sent forth the minister of good to man:
 Views thee with bleak vicissitude endear
 Suns of maturer glow, serener skies:
 Views from thy piercing blast o'erlabour'd earth
 Inhale new vigour, and in transient sleep
 Prepare the glories of the coming year!
 The fleecy mantle that of late conceal'd
 The lawns, and burying deep the furzy brake
 Display'd, upheaved in undulating mounds,
 A rude resemblance of the forms below,
 Is vanish'd. From the south dissolving gales

* "Wyddfa, the highest peak of Snowdon." See Pennant's
 Tour in North Wales, vol. ii. 4to. 1781, p. 162. Art. Snowdonia.

Blew: the snows felt their influence. In the woods,
Humid and comfortless, from dawn to eve
Were heard incessant drippings, pattering loud
When the air moved the branches. The soft mass
Beneath of every drop the impression took,
Pierced into hollows numerous as the cells
That hide the golden treasures of the bee.
Oft, from its lodgement on the forked bough
Sliding, a snowy heap with leaden sound
Sunk buried in the unresisting floor.
Soon through the lessening weight the elastic gorse
Its murky shoots, by contrast darker, push'd.
Soon on the level plain green spots emerged,
Where raised the busy ant or delving mole
Her subterranean dwelling: floppy pools
In the surrounding pool lay stagnant. Streams
From each low bank ran trickling; while above,
The new-born currents, pouring from the hills,
O'er the smooth slope in brown diffusion stray'd,
Or deep in echoing gullies roar'd unseen.
The brook, that late within its hollow bed
In glassy fetters mourn'd, the brittle chains
Shiver'd, and hail'd the tributary floods:
And oft by congregated piles of ice
Obstructed, raged aloud, and strew'd the vale
With fragments. Of the universal white

No speck was left, save where in lonely dell,
Fronting the north, amid the general rout
Unawed its station yet the drift maintain'd,
And seem'd to wait for succour from the skies.
Thus when her standard civilising Art
Plants on some barbarous shore, to mountains bleak
And craggy fastnesses his warrior sons
The angry Genius of the waste withdraws :
There bids them, from the influence abhorr'd
Of Science free, their sanguinary rites,
Their manners rude, and savage laws uphold ;
Till fate once more shall pour them from their caves,
Impatient o'er their long-lost plains again
To spread the veil of ignorance and night.
Earth of its load was lighten'd, and absorb'd
The moisture ; sunny gleams and breezy air
The surface dried. Now Frost again ascends
His throne ; and kindling with unclouded beams
The cope of Heaven, and fixing firm the ground,
Crisp to the tread, from hot and crowded rooms
Calls us his bracing atmosphere to breathe,
And welcome his invigorating power.

Touch'd by his cheering energy, the heart
Beats livelier ; the cheek reddens ; through the frame,
While yet one loitering friend we summon oft
With loud impatience, every vein expands
With buoyant eagerness : we seem to tread

In air, the lawn even now while Fancy scours,
Darts o'er the valley, penetrates the woods
That shag yon slope, and on the naked brow
Pants, and with joy the fresher breeze inhales.
Thus when his host o'er Alps opposed in vain
The Carthaginian led, the last ascent
Labouring o'er icebuilt rocks as now they trod,
Gasping for breath the way-worn myriads paused.
His bulk the wearied elephant reclined,
Uncurl'd his trunk, and drank the eternal snows.
Impatient of a moment lost, the Chief
Press'd forward to the summit; flung an eye
Of transport o'er the wide-spread realms beneath;
Then turn'd, and frown'd, and call'd his lingering van;
Then gazed again on Italy: while Hope
Bade him with glance prophetic mark the stream,
Of Trebia choked with dead; bade him in thought
View Thrasymene's red waves o'er legions roll'd,
Sweep Cannæ's field, and shake the towers of Rome.

Bend we our steps beside this forest brook,
And trace its windings. In yon flat morafs,
Where spiry rushes in divergent files
Rise fledged with rime, where many a stunted bush,
Alder or fallow, cropt by nibbling deer,
Betrays the dampness of the soil beneath,
From secret springs it murmurs. Issuing thence,

Awhile in naked channel o'er the plain
It wanders ; now in short and sudden turns
Twisting round narrow points, as though it fled
Back to its source ; now in extended curves
Sweeping ; now glistening in long reaches ; now
With fretted surface and complaining sound
Hurrying in bright cascades. Then swift it dives
Into this sylvan glen. Behold it whirl
In fullen eddies round that alder's root ;
And far within the brink, where half congeal'd
Lingers the foam, the trout's dark hold prepare :
Whence, as from couchant ambush on the fawn
Loitering beside the jungle * springs the pard,
While brightening with success his spotted sides
Glisten ; the speckled plunderer of the deep,
When June awakes her insect tribes, shall dart
Fierce on the prey, while with unpractised wing
It sports and flutters on the dimpled stream.
Here, the flat turf with easy flexure meets
The wave ; abrupt the adverse side descends
In contrast bold, whence the aspiring ash,
Or time-worn maple starts, or finewy oak
Deep-fixed with many a wreathed root o'erhangs

* The vast thickets in the East Indies, in which leopards and other wild beasts lurk, are known by the appellation of Jungles.

The cavern'd margin. View the marly cliff,
Its base by oozing springs with frostwork glazed,
Various beyond the forms which fancy weaves :
Lo crystal columns glitter ; and disposed
Tier above tier, pellucid cornices,
With plummy darts and sparkling gems emboss'd,
Tell to what height the current lately raised
Its ampler swell, and with diminish'd flood
Sunk gradual. Thus when Rome o'er British plains
The tide of conquest roll'd, her barrier wall,
To Glotta now thy shores, Bodotria, join'd *,
Now to thy sand-banks, Solway, and the waves
Of coaly Tyne withdrew, as rapine sped,
Or valour's patriot arm her range curtail'd,
And chased her baffled eagle from the prey.
Here, where the stream o'er pebbly shallows frets
With murmuring speed, a narrow range of ice
Grows to the edge, or round the uncover'd stone
Concretes ; or fringed with points projecting far,
Circles the gravelly island by the force
Of floods upraised. There, where the deeper reach
Spreads smooth, from side to side a glassy floor
Stretches, nor hides the twinkling rill beneath :

* The Firths of Clyde and Forth.

Or by the stream deserted rears in air
Delusive bridges, to the heedless foot
Of deer, or stranger hasting o'er the wild,
Dangerous, and loudly crashing in their fall.

So when o'er Norway's rocks the mountaineer,
Forming on high the dizzy pathway, meets
Some rifted chasm, in whose unfathom'd depth
The cataract foams, scarce heard above, and whirls
Its clouds of rising vapour; o'er the void
The wither'd birch by storms upturn he throws.
Ere long within the bark * the treacherous wood
Moulders; and leaves the rind, a specious shell,
Bridging the gulf. Beneath the traveller's weight
The specious shell breaks short. He shrieks unheard,
Falls undeplord, by pointed crags below
Awaited, and by torrents to the sea
Swept headlong. Mid her babes his widow sits
Pensive, and eyes the snow-clad hill in vain.

Lo! from its haunt, by crowding alders veil'd,

* The bark of the birch has the property of being more durable than the wood which it envelops. When M. Maupertuis, in his expedition to measure a degree of latitude, traversed the birchen forests of Lapland, in which numbers of trees lay uprooted by the winds; he found, on examining those which had been long blown down, that the substance of the wood was entirely gone, and that the apparently solid trunk consisted only of a shell of bark.

Where mantling in the still unfrozen flood
Aquatic weeds breathe warmth, at our approach
Alarm'd on sounding wing the wild duck soars,
And plies to distant solitudes her course.
The snipe flies screaming from the marshy verge,
And towers in airy circles o'er the wood,
Still heard at intervals; and oft returns,
And stoops, as bent to alight; then wheels aloft
With sudden fear, and screams, and stoops again,
Her favourite glade reluctant to forsake.
So on thy steeps, Helvellyn, when the air
Stagnates in noontide calm, a cloud reclines.
Eddying amid thy rocks ere long a breeze
Disturbs its rest. Unwilling from its couch
The vapour moves: now, by the gulf upborne,
Soars buoyant; now, whene'er the passing gale
Remits, with glad precipitance subsides,
And hangs and lingers on the attractive brow.

Once by yon poplars, through whose twinkling shade
With fruitless glance the oft-reflected beam
Struggled, nor reach'd the dusky flood beneath,
An ancient mill arose. The restless wheel
Scatter'd the sparkling wave amid the gloom,
And broke the noonday silence of the wood.
'Twas there a youth with care fraternal sooth'd
A much-lov'd sister, while a parent lost,

An aged mother whom his toil had fed,
Their mingling tears deplored. One summer eve,
As from short absence he return'd, her shrieks,
Shrieks as though racking pangs o'er life prevail'd,
He heard. The whirling millstone, as she moved
Unwitting of the danger, seized her arm,
And crush'd each muscle. The remorseless gripe
He loosed. Art lent its healing aid in vain.
Nine days in anguish o'er her couch he hung;
The tenth he closed her eyes. The murderous stone,
The floor still spotted with a sister's blood,
The conscious poplars, and the fatal stream,
He could no more behold. His native land
He left for ever; stemm'd the western main;
And, fix'd in depths of solitude to hide
His grief, on Pennsylvania's utmost bound,
Where to man's heaven-appointed rule her sons
Bend the untamed wilderness, prepared
To rear his dwelling. The stupendous scene,
Unlike the humbler wild that gave him birth,
Amazed he view'd, the interminable waste,
The woods of giant growth, the piny swamp
Darkening the humid air: and oft would note
Curious the wings unknown that cross'd the glade,
And mark the scaly serpent as he slunk
Through rustling leaves, or darting onward shook

The warning rattle *; or beside the root
 Of some time-honour'd trunk in spiral folds
 Coil'd motionless, his fascinating eye
 Fix'd on the conscious victim perch'd above.
 Chair'd by the potent glance, the helpless prey
 With piteous cries and wildly ruffled plumes
 Flutter'd from bough to bough, descending still,
 Nor shunn'd the jaws of death that gaped below.
 Meanwhile of rugged logs † his cot he framed,

* That the Rattlesnake frequents the latitude of Pennsylvania, appears from Carver's Travels through the interior Parts of North America, 2d ed. p. 43; and from Long's Voyages and Travels of an Indian Interpreter, p. 149. It is indeed found as far northward as lat. 49. See Long's Voyages, p. 159. The power which this animal possesses of *charming* his prey by fixing his eye upon it, is asserted by various witnesses; and its effect is thus described by Catesby: "The animals, particularly birds and squirrels, which principally are its prey, no sooner spy the snake, than they skip from spray to spray, hovering and approaching gradually nearer to their enemy, regardless of any other danger; but with distracted gestures and outcries descend, though from the top of the loftiest trees, to the mouth of the snake, who openeth his jaws, takes them in, and in an instant swallows them." History of Carolina, vol. ii. p. 41.

† In the third volume of the Memoirs of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester, a very curious and interesting account of the mode of establishing settlements in the remote parts of Pennsylvania is given by Dr. Rush of Philadelphia. Speaking of a settler in the woods, Dr. Rush says, p. 184: "His first object is to build a small cabin of rough logs for himself and his family.

And stopp'd each chink with moss, lest searching rains
 Or snows by winter's gusty breath impell'd
 Should drench his nightly couch : then from the foil
 Clear'd the rough brushwood, and round every stem
 Of ampler girth the fatal circle drew.
 Blighted and wan the vernal foliage mourn'd
 Its intercepted nutriment, and strew'd

" A coarser building, adjoining to this cabin, affords shelter to a
 " cow and a pair of poor horses. The labour of erecting these
 " buildings is succeeded by that of killing the trees on a few
 " acres of ground near his cabin. This is done by cutting a circle
 " round the trees two or three feet from the ground. The ground
 " around these trees is then ploughed, and Indian corn planted
 " in it."

Mr. Smyth, in a *Tour in the United States of America*, 8vo. London 1784, speaks as follows: " The general mode of clearing
 " the land in this country, where timber is of no value and labour
 " is of great, is by cutting a circle round the tree through the
 " bark quite to the wood before the sap rises, which kills it. And
 " they cultivate the ground below immediately, leaving the trees
 " to rot standing, which happens within a very few years; and
 " they never bear leaves more. A large field in this situation
 " makes a most singular, striking, and tremendous appearance.
 " It would seem indeed dangerous to walk in it, as the trees are
 " of a prodigious height and magnitude; vast limbs and branches
 " of enormous size impending in awful ruins from a great height,
 " sometimes breaking off, and frequently whole trees falling to the
 " ground with a horrible crash, the sound of which is increased
 " and protracted by the reverberation of the surrounding echoes."
 Vol. i. p. 94, 95.

The ground, as when the gale of autumn whirls
The leafy shower : the solitary trunks
Frown'd on the rising harvest. Time ere long
Loosen'd the roots, and tempests on the plain
The thundering downfall hurl'd : the midnight crash
Startled the forest. Each succeeding spring
Beheld the waste retire. The pastured field,
The emerald meadow, and the waving gleam
Of corn by breezes moved, and all the charms
Of hard-earn'd home, bade peace the exile's brow
Dilate, and brighten the yet-heaving tide
Of antient sorrow : in the void of air
As the red moon new risen o'er Ocean hangs,
Streams a long line of radiance on the flood,
And golden billows welter to the shore.

One vernal eve, as wrapt in lonely thought
He traced his confines, from the bordering waste
An aged man came forth : his tottering steps
With looks of filial love a maiden watch'd,
And propp'd him with her arm ; and when he sigh'd,
Sigh'd deeper, yet in haste the sound restrain'd,
Lest he should mark it. From the voice of woe
The exile never turn'd : the fire he join'd,
And ask'd his grief.—Long in a distant wild
He dwelt in peace. With malice unprovoked
And thirst of plunder fired, an Indian band,

What time no pitying moonbeam spoke their guile,
Stole on his sleep. At once with savage yell
The war-whoop echoed from the wood; the torch
Flung frequent seized the roof; the shiver'd door
Sunk from the stroke; his son the onset braved
With fruitless arms; the shriek of death was heard,
And life's last drops the gashing tomahawk drain'd.
Fierce on the spoil the murderers rush'd: unseen
The fire and daughter fled, forlorn to roam,
Think on the slain, and beg their daily food.—
Thy throbbings, Memory, in the exile's breast
The sad recital waked. With faltering lip
He sooth'd the wanderers, to his mansion led,
And cried, "Behold your home! And may the Power
" Who seeming evil still to good transforms,
" Who pitying saw, when sorrow at your peace
" Her keenest arrows aim'd, as once at mine,
" Bind up the wound!" Nor many a moon had fired
And quench'd her varying crescent, ere that home
Could please no more, unless the stranger maid
Call'd it of right her own. For she was fair
As pictured Innocence, and mental grace
Spoke in each feature. Soon the enraptured youth
The impassion'd secret told. With downcast eye
And burning cheek she listen'd to his tale;
Own'd the quick pulse that trembled at her heart,

And named it gratitude, but felt it love.
Weeping for joy the fire their union hail'd;
With hands to heaven upraised his children blest:
And smiling years proclaim'd the blessing heard.

Climb we this brow; the groves, whose naked scenes
Still have their charms, invite us. In array
Compact they stand, a various host; as when
The Empress of the north her subject tribes
Combined for war, the much enduring Rufs
Slow-paced, the Kalmuck glorying in his speed,
The dwarfish Laplander, Livonian huge,
Siberia's shaggy race, Circassia's sons
For beauty famed, and Samoeide compressed
In Nature's rudest mould. Imperial oak!
Hail on thy central lawn, while rang'd around
In pomp irregular to distance due
The subject woods retire. Of strength supreme
Thy every feature tells. Thy rugged roots
Now seize with eagle grasp the earth, now heave
The incumbent soil. Thy huge and furrow'd trunk,
With many a rough protuberance emboss'd,
The lapse attests of numerous ages, fled
With all their generations. Deeply scorch'd,
Pierced, and snapp'd short, thy top records a blast
Wing'd with tempestuous lightning, and with rage
Of Alpine storm, for less had ne'er atchiev'd

The mighty boast, impell'd. Projected wide
O'er the bare plain with horizontal stretch,
Thy arms enormous, girt with wither'd leaves,
And tufted still with misleto, no more
By Druid hands and golden sickle cropt,
Rear their abrupt contortions ; and uphold
With firm support the thickly-woven spray.
Defect of strength compensating with grace,
Behold the shapely ash from yonder group
Advance : the stem, with mossy broidure dark,
Its flowing line prolongs ; in airy sweep
Curve above curve the careless branches wave,
In beauty's facile bend then upward turn,
Studded with fable gems, gems loth to yield
The leaves they shroud to April's fickle gale.
Behold the birch in mimic sorrow droop,
With silver mantle torn, and wait the call
Of Spring in many a lucid rill to pour
Nectarean tears. Behold the fable yew
In ever-during armour frown, and vaunt
Its boughs elastic, once of Albion deem'd,
What thou art now, imperial oak, the pride
And bulwark, when her sons, at Freedom's nod,
On Kent's white cliffs and Cumbrian hills array'd,
Drew the long bow, and pointed shafts repell'd
Invading Gaul, and Caledonia's rage.

Nor less its wintry honours unimpair'd
The ivy boasts : not as when freakt by art
With motley tints it decorates the wall
Of painted summer-house, or trim alcove :
But o'er its native thicket wanders wide,
Dark-robed ; and round the thorn's imprison'd trunk
Twisting in hairy volumes, spreads its veil,
And loads the boughs with verdure not their own.
But foremost of the troop whose hardy files
Close ranged, thy wrath, despoiling Autumn, scorn,
The holly glows ; in summer's gaudy bower
Dull and unnoticed ; now, when winter's voice
Roars through the wood, with native coral bright,
And armed leaves ; as virtues in thy glare,
Prosperity, long torpid and unseen,
When Fortune rolls her adverse waves, break forth,
Refulgent. Now a solitary cone
On pale gray trunk it raises : now combines
Its crowded tops and intermingling stems
In social groups : now stretches o'er the hills
In woods continuous, with nocturnal gloom
Still dusky, save where through some narrow cleft
The prying ray steals entrance ; or a shower
Of splendid atoms twinkles in the sun,
While the keen thrush the berried twig invades,
Or from the rimy boughs the ringdove breaks.

Cloſe crowding to the roots the foxglove ſhuns
The peaſant's weighty tread ; and rears its ſtems,
Summer's brown reliques, late with pendent bells
Reddening the wild, now wither'd and forlorn,
Fringed with dry fragments ruſtling in the breeze.
Thus o'er the warrior's urn while Victory bends
In monumental woe, his mighty lance
Sordid with duſt, and blunt with cankering age,
High on the wall mid tatter'd enſigns hangs,
And mouldering trophies of its paſt renown.

Why gleams the axe ? Why falls the verdant branch ?
Falls it with emblematic green to deck
The fane, or in the cheerful window twined
The village grace ; while man adoring learns
The wonders of his Saviour's birth, or hails
With feſtal gratitude the newborn year ?
Hark ! louder ſtill the invaded woodlands groan ;
And ampler deſolation ſtrews the ground.
Call'd by the well-known echoes, that announce
To every herd throughout the adjacent lawns
Scatter'd the hour of food, when ſylvan ſpoils
The ſhrivel'd herbage of the plain ſupply,
Lo the deer haſte : as when at farm-yard gate
The noontide bell, ſwung long, and tinkling far,
The peaſant bands expecting due repaſt
Summons from many a field. The prickly leaves



Welland Stimp?

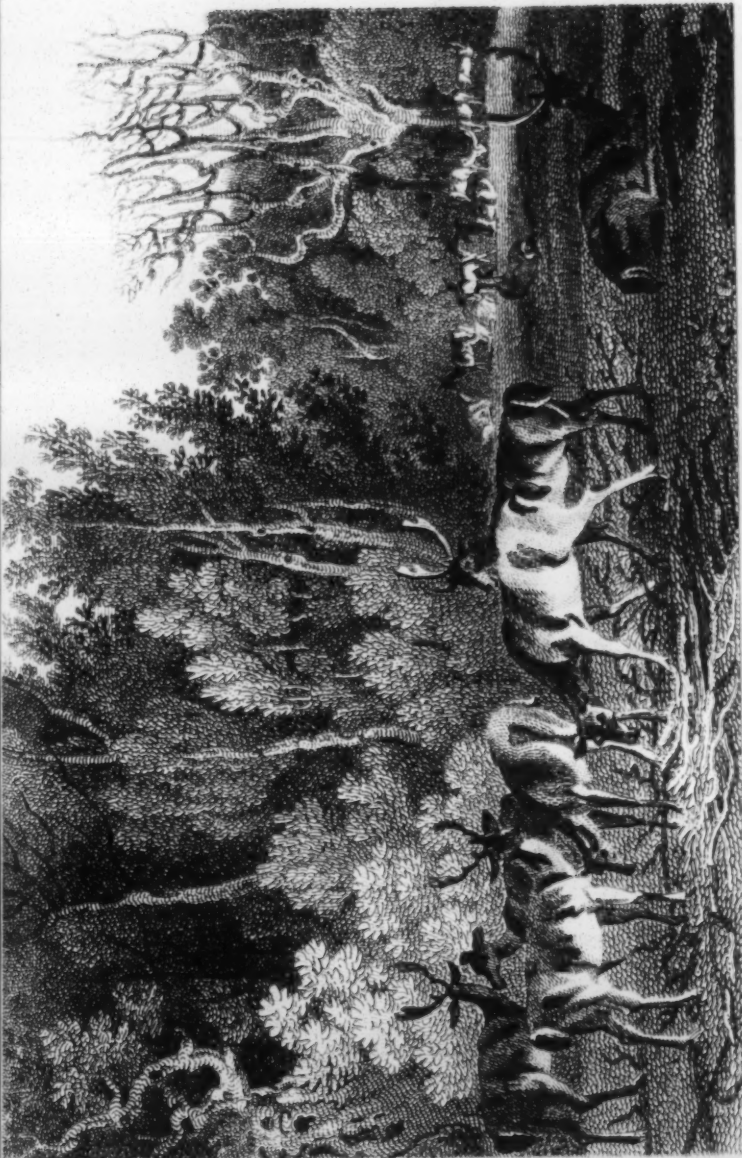
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*"The prickly leaves
Early's they cry."*

S. Gelpin del.

Close crowding to the roots the foxglove fluns
The peasant's weighty tread; and rears its stem,
Summer's brown reliques, late with pendent bells
Reddening the wild, now wither'd and forlorn,
Tringed with dry fragments rustling in the breeze,
Thus o'er the warrior's urn while Victory bends
In monumental woe, his mighty lance
Sordid with dust, and blunt with cankering age,
High on the wall mid tatter'd ensigns hangs,
And mouldering trophies of its past renown.

Why gleams the axe? Why falls the verdant branch?
Falls it with emblematic green to deck
The fane, or in the cheerful window twined
The village grace; while man adoring learns
The wonders of his Saviour's birth, or hails
With festal gratitude the newborn year?
Hark! louder still the invaded woodlands groan;
And ampler desolation strews the ground,
Call'd by the well-known echoes, that announce
To every herd throughout the adjacent lawns
Scatter'd the hour of food, when sylvan spoils
The shrivel'd herbage of the plain supply,
Lo the deer haste: as when at farmyard gate
The noontide bell, swung long, and tinkling far,
The peasant bands expecting due repast
Summons from many a field. The prickly leave



Western Wood

Published by the American Museum of Natural History, New York

1871

Plate 1

1871



Fearless they crop ; then seize the slender shoots ;
Then from the firmer branches strip the rind,
Not doom'd the schoolboy's viscous rods to arm,
And snare the antient tenants of the shade.
Hither, ye children of the cot, repair ;
The herds have browsed their fill ; the spoil is yours.
In thought even now I hear your busy tongues :
I see your ruddy cheeks still deeper dy'd
By the keen air : I see your purple hands
Drag the forsaken boughs : I see you bend
All playful o'er the evening hearth, and rub
The smarting eyeball, as ye watch the smoke
Burst forth in puffs ; or touch the steaming rind
With timorous finger oft and oft withdrawn ;
While foamy sap through every crevice boils,
And hisses in the half-extinguish'd fire.

Whether still green, with leafy guard the boughs
Encircled rise, or bleak with horrent spray
Shiver in naked ranks, alike o'er all
Winter his petrifying sceptre waves ;
Hurls from her throne the Vegetative Power ;
Chains in its harden'd rind the trunk ; with cry
Terrific shakes the branches ; in the bud
Seals up the leaflet ; and in every vein
Curdles the stagnant sap. Yet at thy name,
King of the tempests, though through all her realms

Creation shudders, and her feebler tribes
Torpida and whelm'd in deathlike sleep surveys ;
Time's active strength nor flags nor slumbers : Time,
Numb'd by no frost, retarded by no storm,
Still speeds his never-varied course, still swells
With days and months and years his journey'd store.
Nor shall his haste be slacken'd, till he gains
The peak of that vast mountain, up whose steep
Straining for ages he has toil'd ; and treads
Unconscious on the brink of the abyss,
Thy gulph, Eternity, foredoom'd his grave,
Takes one step more, and is for ever lost.
Thus when its sacred rest the Sabbath breathes,
Labour's tired hand, the unyoked ox, the earth
Safe from the share, repofes ; in the port
Thy din, close anchoring Commerce, stuns no more ;
Mute is the empty mart ; unheard the rage
Of pleaders ; Justice, with relenting brow,
Sheathes on the hallowed morn her sword ; a pause,
A solemn pause, all nature seems to feel,
Save in the frowning camp. War knows no rest ;
War owns no sabbath ; War, with impious toil
Unspent, with blood unsated, to the fiends
Of vengeance still rebellows, still pursues
His work of death ; nor pauses, nor relents,
For laws divine, or sight of human woe.

Sunk in the vale, whose concave depth receives
 The waters draining from these shelvy banks
 When the shower beats, yon pool with pallid gleam
 Betrays its icy covering. From the glade
 Issuing in penfive file, and moving flow,
 The cattle, all unwitting of the change,
 To quench their customary thirst advance.
 With wondering stare and fruitless search they trace
 The solid margin: now bend low the head
 In act to drink; now with fastidious nose
 Snuffing the marble floor, and breathing loud,
 From the cold touch withdraw. Awhile they stand
 In disappointment mute; with ponderous feet
 Then bruise the surface: to each stroke the woods
 Reply; forth gushes the imprison'd wave.

So when thy keel, adventurous MONK *, had plow'd
 The Arctic streight; when on the beach, convulsed

* Captain Monk was dispatched in the year 1619 by Christian IV. king of Denmark, to attempt the discovery of a north-east passage to China. He wintered on the shore of Hudson's Bay; and relates that the cold was so intense, that neither beer, wine, nor brandy could resist it; but were frozen up, and the vessels which contained them were split into pieces: and that, before they could use the liquors, they were obliged to hew them with hatchets, and dissolve them by fire. The classical reader will recollect Virgil's description of a Scythian winter:

—cæduntque securibus humida vina.

With flock of floating isles and driving cliffs
Rear'd in pellucid adamant, thy crew
Listening the crash their wintry dwelling raised ;
Nor juice of grape by southern suns matured,
Nor fierce Geneva with internal fire
Ardent the petrifying blast withstood.
The expanding vessel roar'd. Protruded pale
From the staved ends the pillar'd ice amazed
The thirsty mariners. The glassy draught
Eager they hew with axes, crush with bars,
Shiver with hammers, and o'er piny boughs
Heap'd high the fragments in the caldron pile.
Quick moves the hand, the labouring bellows pant ;
The cheer'd flame glows beneath the brazen cave ;
On its hot sides the round drops hiss ; the flood
Slow-rising simmers ; o'er the sinking mass
Throng'd in close circle gleaming faces hang,
And half devour it with impatient eyes.

Through Winter's sylvan realms in devious course
Thus rove our steps. We linger, pleased to note
His mien peculiar. Deem we then the face
Of changeful seasons varied but to charm
The gazing eye, and sooth the vacant mind ?
Say, is not Nature's ample tome display'd,
Even to the careless wanderer in the field,
With loftier purpose ? Wisdom's dictates pure,

Themes of momentous import, character'd
By more than human finger, every page
Discloses. He, who form'd this beauteous globe
So fair, amid its brightest scenes hath hung
Fit emblems of a perishable world ;
And grav'd on tablets he that runs may read
Your fickle date, ye sublunary joys.
The buds doth Spring unfold, and, thick as dew
Spangling the grass, the purple bloom diffuse ?
Comes a chill blight, and bids the sanguine youth
Read in its ravages a lore that tells
Of frustrate plans, and hope indulged in vain.
Do Summer suns the mead with herbage load,
And tinge the ripening year ? With sudden rage
The thunderstorm descends ; the river swells
Impatient, leaps the mound ; and, while the waves
Devour the promised harvest, calls on Thee,
O Man, to tremble for thy daily bread.
The faded leaves doth Autumn scatter wide ;
Or Winter rend the desolated boughs,
And lay the fathers of the forest low ?
Child of the dust, attend ! To thee they cry,
Each from his whirlwind, " Earth is not thy home."
They bid thee seek, nor fruitless deem the toil,
A more enduring dwelling-place ; the joys
Unutterable, which nor eye hath seen,

Nor ear hath heard, nor heart of man * conceived ;
Joys which in worlds to holy peace consign'd,
Empyrean realms, Omnipotence prepares
For those who love their God : joys then to ope
Their stores, when from the Judge's face, as dew
Shrinks from the sun, this earth, these heavens, are
fled † ;

And all the palm-crown'd sons of holiness,
With garments wash'd in their Redeemer's blood ‡,
Shout their hosannas round his throne ; and, join'd
With angels, and to angels equal made,
Bathe in the fount of ever-during bliss.

Do Seasons teach in vain ? Doth Nature's voice
Sound in dull ears ? Has Truth, disclosed from heaven,
With useless toil on Nature's volume pour'd
New radiance ; and her sacred shafts beheld
Bound unimpressive from the callous heart ?
Tremble, insensate triflers ! Tremble, mourn,
O race obdurate ! Ye that slight the love,
That mock the vengeance of eternal Power :
Love, on whose wonders raptur'd Angels gaze ;
Vengeance, in flames to shuddering Fiends reveal'd !
What yet remains ? The hour, that ends the joys
And wakes the throbs of guilt ; the hour, that cries,

* 1 Cor. ii. 9.

† Rev. xx. 11.

‡ Rev. vii. 14.

“ Trial is past, and Judgement reigns ;” the hour,
That bids accusing Memory barb her darts ;
That brings the fruitless sigh, the conscious pang,
Of ruin self-induced, and mercy lost
For ever, the blank horrors of despair !

So, warn'd of God, from cities long grown deaf
To sacred exhortation to the depth
Of mountain woods his sons the Patriarch led.
There with long-drawn and wide-extended line
He stretch'd the mighty keel and curved the ribs
Of that capacious vessel, doom'd to save
The wrecks of nature. Oft would gathering crowds
With stupid gaze the growing fabric watch,
Or point the taunting finger. He meanwhile,
Year after year, untired the task pursued ;
Till wonder ceased to mark his toil, nor scorn
Deign'd to deride him more. One morn, the heavens
Grew dark with wings ; earth with unnumber'd steps
Sounded ; bird, beast, in long procession fought
Their destined refuge. With his kindred train
The builder next ascended. From the gloom
Of congregating clouds put forth, a Hand *
The entrance closed. Then darkness cover'd all,

* “ They went in unto Noah into the ark—and the Lord shut
“ him in.” Gen. vii. 15, 16.

Deathlike, unfunn'd, as though primeval night
 Refum'd her empire. Torrents from the skies
 Plunged prone in solid downfall. Earth her depths
 Burst. Thronging on the summits of the hills,
 As seamen crowded on the mainmast's top
 While at each billow deeper sinks the ship
 And deeper, nations their despairing eyes
 Roll'd round ; from every surge in lessening orb
 Shrunk ; their wild arms uplifted ; stretch'd their necks
 Above the rising waves, and shriek'd their last.

Father of earth and heaven, Almighty Lord,
 Whose span confines infinity *, whose eye
 Surveys eternal ages at a glance ;
 How long, in crowding millions round thy throne
 On balanced wings while spirits pure thy nod
 Await, in bliss most blessed when Thou deign'st
 To speak thy mandate, and their service use ;
 How long shall man with cold reluctant heart
 Ponder the truths thy word, thy works, declare ?
 Yet here, even here, in this apostate vale
 Still Thou hast many servants. But afar
 From thy abode the vain, the selfish throng
 On Folly's glittering stream securely floats,

*

———wild uproar

Stood ruled, stood vast Infinitude confined.

MILTON.

Or toils through storms for honour, power, or gold.
Thou art not in their thoughts, nor in their ways.
This to his pleasure turns, this to his farm,
That to his merchandise. The globe rolls round ;
And still another and another Spring
Beholds the chafers urge the blind pursuit,
Nearer, yet nearer, to the gloom that hangs
In misty volumes on the horizon's verge,
And hides the gulf wide-yawning for its prey.
Meanwhile they feast, they dance ; the jocund harp
Rings at their board ; the viol, tabret, horn,
And lute symphonious to the choral lay,
Pour the full tide of harmony : but Thee
They slight, nor mark the wonders of thy hand !
Yet name they not their God?—What name they more?
Thy holy name the town, the country hears
In ceaseless repetition ; day and night,
Business and leisure, indigence and wealth,
All hours, all places hear thy holy name.
Strange to the heart, why dwells it on the tongue ?
To round a period with sonorous close ;
To court the fool's applause by daring Thee ;
To tell the passing impulse of surprise ;
To vent the fumes of disappointed hope ;
To silence doubt, that scans the uncertain tale ;
To swell the evening roar of impious mirth,

When wine unchains the proud blasphemer's joy ;
To arm the curse that for a word, a look,
To realms of endless woe a brother hurls,
Stamp'd with thy image, nurtured by thy love.
Father of all, yet spare ! Thine arm extend
In mercy, not in judgement : loose the bonds
Thou only canst unlock, bonds firm as links
Of adamant, that gird the slaves of guilt.
Pierce the deaf ear, the sightless eyeball cleanse,
The dull mind quicken, melt the obdurate heart.
Teach the awaken'd soul with kindling joy
In all that air and earth and sea display,
Through each returning season, to behold
Thee, the great Author : mid the changing scenes
And varying cares of life bid her on Thee
Fix her supreme regard, thy will explore,
Revere thy counsels, thy behests obey !

THE END.



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